



THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CHINESE DOG

EDITED BY HIS MISSUS
FLORENCE AYSCOUGH
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
LUCILLE DOUGLASS

0800

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CHINESE DOG

By Florence Ayscough

Yo Fei, Mrs. Ayscough's little Chinese dog, has undertaken to tell the story of his life and adventures, a task in which his mistress acts as his amanuensis. Yo Fei is a gentleman of courage, culture, and discrimination, and his autobiography is worthy of him. He is successful in revealing both his own personality and that of his native land. He does not, however, confine himself entirely to China, for he writes also of his travels with his mistress in Canada and England. In every country he shows himself an acute observer, and on every page a writer of great talent.

Readers will not only find through Yo Fei — the most Chinese of all creatures — a key to the mysteries of the living China of to-day, but will revel in this delightful story, cast in unusual form.

Illustrations by Lucille Douglass



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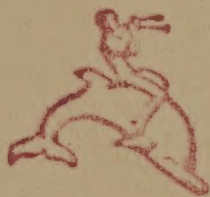
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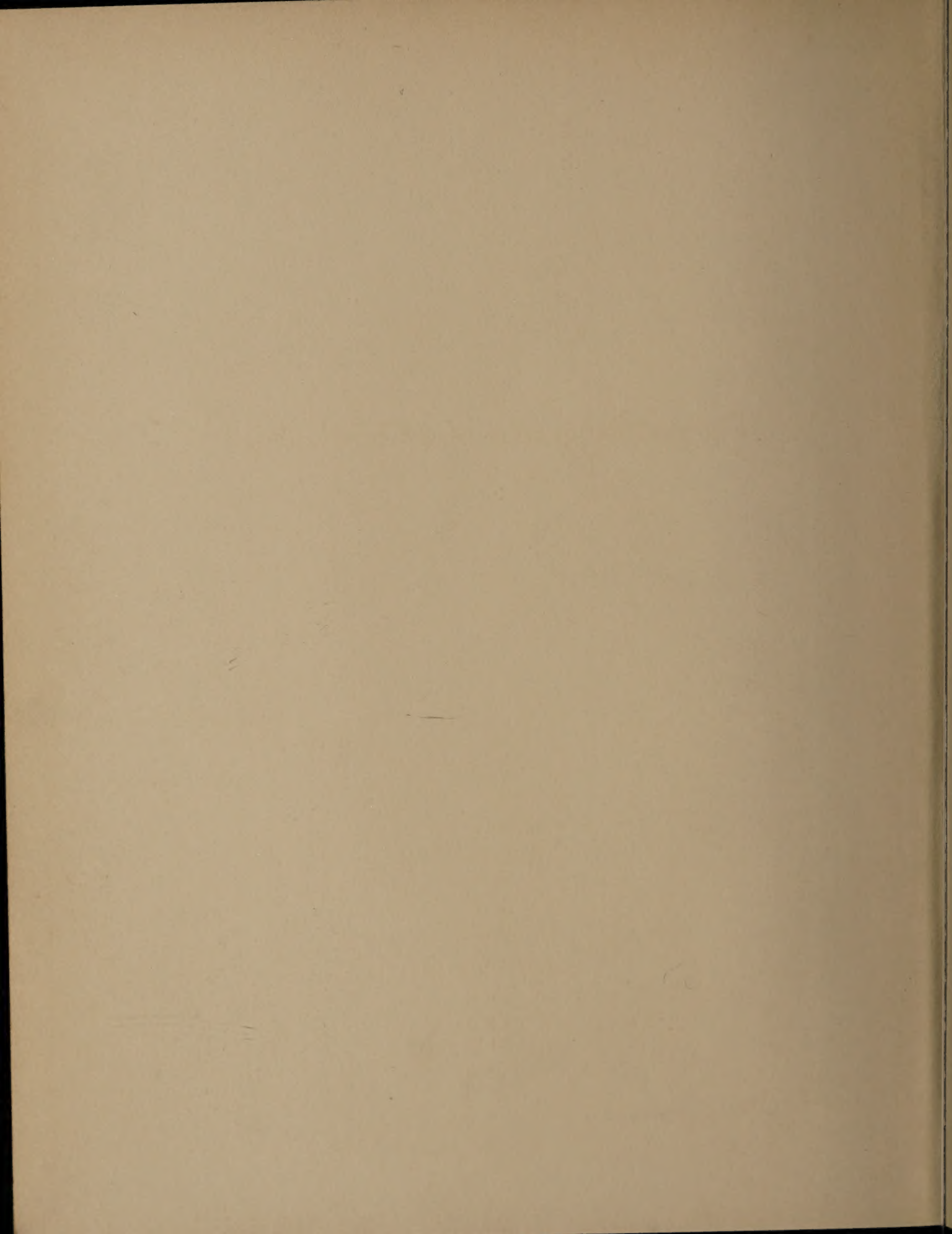
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The Autobiography of a Chinese Dog



MISSUSS SAYS 'TSO I TSO' AND I IMMEDIATELY 'SIT A SIT'

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CHINESE DOG

EDITED BY
HIS MISSUSS
(Florence Ayscough)

WITH WRITING-BRUSH SKETCHES BY
LUCILLE DOUGLASS



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To my Uncle Peter



in happy memory of many sails, when I, tucked in my striped sweater, accompanied him on his boat the 'Wu Yuen'—the Five-Coloured Cloud which carries the elect to the Island of the Immortals in the Jade-Grey Eastern Sea —

from
Yo FEI

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The little dogs on the cover and between the sections are copied from a scroll which belonged to the late Empress Dowager, reproduced in Mr. Collier's book 'Dogs of China and Japan in Nature and Art.'

Foreword by the Editor

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES! Records of experience, of the slow and painful stitching required to perfect the patch of embroidery allotted to each living creature: — embroidery on the brocade of Destiny that is woven in the loom of the Weaving Maiden in the high, bright sky. Only once during the whole long year does the Maiden rest, and that is when, on the seventh day of the Seventh Moon, she crosses the Silver River on a bridge made by all the magpies in the Universe, in order to meet upon the other shore the Oxherd, her lover. When the eighth day dawns she is at work again throwing her shuttle laden with the threads of circumstance and accident, of opportunity and design, across the tight-stretched warp of Universal Life.

And who shall say that only human beings are of importance in the pattern she weaves? It would never be your Missuss, my little Yo Fei.

I think if you could take a rabbit's fur writing-brush in your silver paw, the record of your experiences would, as the Chinese say, 'read in this manner' —

Mid-Winter — By the Bay of Plentiful Fish,
New Brunswick.

YES, as dogs' lives go, mine has been unusual. I have travelled far — very far; the clear mirror of my intelligence is suspended high — very high; and in addition to all this I have participated in the study of Chinese literature and listened to the recital of history and legend for days and weeks at a time. Does it not seem reasonable that I should share my experiences with those less travelled and less cultivated than myself?

I write now from the Maritime Provinces of Canada. The Bay of Plentiful Fish opens into the Bay of Fundy, which has the highest and fiercest tide in the whole wide world. Even in our bay the tide runs swiftly, as I, who spend so much time upon the water, fully realize. I am not specially fond of sailing as such, but the yacht is the only means of reaching our island across the bay, and our island is a paradise for any dog.

As I sit here blinking at the kitchen fire in that soft stillness which only snow brings, I can almost smell the aromatic scent of spruce trees and balsams which in summer I snuff so eagerly as our boat nears the shore. Snow is delightful — it is so stimulating. I dash about, my tail uncurled, and roll in it with joy, but of course the days are short. It seems an excellent moment to write my autobiography, especially as Missuss and Uncle Peter are away.

They always vanish before winter comes, leaving me in charge. I feel it keenly at first, but the good friends who help me are so very kind, and know my taste in bones so very well, that I soon become used to the absence of my usual companions.

The Autobiography of a Chinese Dog

PART ONE

IN THE PROVINCE EAST-OF-THE-MOUNTAIN



THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CHINESE DOG

• • •

PART ONE

In the Province East-of-the-Mountain

I

I WAS born in China, in a little hamlet among the rocky mountains of Shantung — Province 'East-of-the-Mountain,' and a very noted Province too. We Chinese believe that creatures partake of the nature of the soil they spring from, and that the most noble are born among hills. I do not doubt that there is something in this belief. The great Confucius was born in Shantung, so was his disciple Mencius, and in their days, dogs of my breed, the Lo-sze, were used in the pursuit of game, so naturally I have a love of the chase in my very blood. Whether mother had this love or not I really do not know. She could not leave us puppies at first, and I started on my life of travel when but two months old. It was the period of White Dew in early Autumn, and during the daytime the sun was so hot that we puppies often sought shade after our game;

the little boys wore scarlet embroidered aprons, their summer clothing; the little girls, long wide silk trousers and no coats. The fields were full of waving 'tall millet' nearly ready for cutting and the pomegranates were beginning to ripen. Soon the threshing floor would be in use, but meanwhile it was a grand place for children and puppies to explore.

Our hamlet was called 'Li Chai,' or the home of the Pear-Tree Clan, and one day I heard old grandmother say that her son Pear-Tree Three was coming home to see her. She was inordinately proud of Pear-Tree Three, who had gone away from home to study foreign medicine. Pear-Trees One and Two cultivated the family land and reared wild silkworms on the scrub oak of the hillsides; they looked the honest farmers they were, but Pear-Tree Three — ah, he was very different! When he climbed the hill to our little house dressed in strange clothes, I could not imagine who he was, but my mother knew him and greeted him joyfully. He was evidently very fond of her; he stroked her gently, and admired us, her babies, one by one.

At sundown when the air began to be chilly, we puppies snuggled up to mother and she lay close to Pear-Tree Three while he ate his evening meal, ignoring the Confucian tenet that meals should be eaten in silence. On the contrary, he talked steadily; about the busy place he came from, the strange work he did; and then he remarked

casually that the foreign doctor's little girl wanted a *ha pa*, or 'short-mouthed laughing dog' which is what the country people call us Lo-sze. I hardly noticed his words at the time. I was sleepy and mother was nice and warm.

Three days later, however, when the sun's light was still concealed behind the hills, Pear-Tree Three bent over mother, stroked her gently, murmured a few words to her, and then — why, then he picked me up from by her side, pushed me into the breast of his coat, and carried me away; and when the sun rose above the far horizon, its level rays shone full in the eyes of Pear-Tree Three who was following the 'bird's path' leading from the hilltops to the sea. He carried me, a tiny yellow puppy, in his arms, and I suddenly realized that I was the *ha pa* dog destined for the foreign doctor's little girl! I felt very very small.



II

SHE was not so bad. Of course she did not look like my dear little dark-eyed, black-haired Golden Bells with whom I used to play on the threshing floor. Oh, no — quite different — why, Nellie's hair was the colour of straw, and her eyes pale, like washed-out blue rags — but she was very nice and I loved her dearly.

Golden Bells had called me 'Little Apricot,' because of my beautiful colour, but Nellie called me 'Buster,' I don't know why; at all events we played together all day, and I slept in a basket at the foot of her bed all night, and we were happy as the months rolled by. I grew from a puppy to quite a respectable dog; the cold Winter passed, Spring with its blossoms came and went, Summer arrived, and then something dreadful happened. The house was all upset; boxes and trunks were brought in; Nellie and her mother *went away*. Everybody seemed too busy to bother about me or my food. I felt very very lost.



III

WEI-HAI-WEI, the place we lived in, lay by the sea, and this was fortunate, as when my meals were too sketchy I could hurry to the beach where I was sure to find a fish-tail or two amongst the rubbish at the high-water line; and because of my loneliness I consoled myself by playing with the dogs of very mixed ancestry who haunted this same beach. It was quite amusing.

One rainy afternoon I was searching the water line for titbits when I noticed two foreign ladies strolling on the shore. One said to the other, 'There is the dog you are to have — that brown one on the beach.' The other lady

made an ejaculation and hurried away. However, before I had half finished my fish-tail she returned, and with her came the Doctor's House-Boy. He picked me up in the most undignified manner — had I realized his intention I should have run away — the lady carried my basket, and we started off together up the hill to a house I had never seen before, and there the Boy put me down.

The lady, I will admit, tried to be nice to me, but I couldn't *bear* her. Humans are most extraordinary; they expect a dog to be quite ready to make friends on the instant. I wouldn't eat her supper. I didn't like her room. There was a string around my neck or I should have gone home at once. Bedtime came and she said, 'I think Buster will sleep well in his basket,' and then took off the string. She was right. I was so tired from annoyance that I did sleep — until dawn. Then, feeling quite fresh, I determined to take matters into my own hands and leave. The verandah was nicely enclosed with mosquito netting, but after all it is not very difficult to scratch a hole in *netting*. I made a very large one, and before long was hurrying home. The Boy seemed surprised to see me, and not at all pleased; in fact he was very short, and calling coolie sent me up the hill again!

That night I determined to make a vocal demonstration. This I did at one A.M. The lady had worked hard to amuse me all day long, but when I began to scream she picked me up, and threw me out into the starlit night,

exclaiming, 'I hope I shall never see you again!' But she did. I reached home only to be scolded by Boy, caught by coolie, and carried up the hill once more. This time the lady seemed no more glad to see me than I was to see her, and goodness knows if we ever should have made friends if I had not fallen ill. We Chinese dogs are like that; we make friends very slowly, but friends once made are friends forever. I was very ill. I decided to die. Missuss, however, made me change my mind by pouring egg-nogs down my throat. I screamed when she did it, but I had to lick my chops afterwards; there was quite a pleasant taste of sugar and whisky, and I began to feel the glow of returning health.



IV

THE coast-line of China is not especially jagged as coast-lines go, but between the thirty-sixth and thirty-eighth parallels of latitude, the Promontory of Shantung thrusts its bold outline into the depths. At this point the water of the Yellow Sea is no longer coloured by sediment from the Great River, but sparkles in the clear atmosphere, larkspur blue. Flat-bottomed coast steamers move in a very strange manner as they round the point and passengers are as a rule extremely glad to reach the deep-cut bay



THE SUN-HIGH HOURS OF THE DAY

which stretches to the South and East of Wei-Hai-Wei — Outpost of Defence by-the-Awe-Inspiring Sea. High hills encircle it West and North, so the little walled city lies in a veritable sun-trap, and even cold winter days are tempered, while Summer heat is mitigated by the South-west monsoon, which sweeps across the water, cooler here than it is South of the Promontory.

Even so, it was fairly hot and during the sun-high hours of day, we were apt to stay indoors. I had a delightful shallow round basket which Amah called my official residence; and I cannot imagine that in the wide world more comfortable baskets can exist than those found in the 'Outpost of Defence.' They are pretty, too, in their weave, and Missuss always covered mine with a square of deep purple raw silk, most becoming, in colour, to me. Staying indoors was therefore no hardship; I simply curled up and dozed. While I dozed, Missuss studied with Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos, whom she called '*hsien shêng*,' 'prior-born' — a term my country-people apply to fathers, elder brothers, or people who instruct them. As a rule he and she translated Chinese poetry together, and many letters travelled back and forth between Missuss and a person to whom she seemed very devoted. Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos always referred to this person as Love-Poetry-Mother's Friend. I learned that her surname was 'Lowell' and her name 'Amy.' It seemed that she rendered into English un-

rhymed cadence the translations which Missuss made, and she was always asking questions about Chinese poetry and its composition. She wanted, for instance, to know exactly what the form called *fu* was like, because she thought it resembled 'polyphonic prose,' a medium she used herself. So Missuss wrote her what a Chinese writer had to say on the subject:

'There is no hard-and-fast pattern for the "tones" in a *fu*, but words must flow naturally from the lips in a smooth and musical manner. A *fu* must be like a good road on which there are no rough places or inequalities. Phrases may be long or short; phrases may be many or few; but the rhymes in each group must be of the same "tone" — that is, either *p'ing*, level, or *tsê*, oblique; and each rhyme can only be used once.'

We Chinese cite six laws which govern *fu*: they shall possess: 'firstly, variegated colour, generously laid on; secondly, a display of scholarly ornament; thirdly, perfection of literary style; fourthly, they must set forth aims, desires, and ambitions; fifthly, a *fu* must stir and exalt the emotions; and sixthly, it shall induce passion.'

A great master of *fu* was the one-eyed Emperor Yüan, of the Liang Dynasty, who lived A.D. 508–554. He was doubtless a very learned man, as he possessed one hundred and forty thousand ancient books. He loved them so much that when he realized that his enemies were about to kill him, he set his library on fire and burnt them

every one. Personally I felt but very little sympathy with him. He is supposed to have expressed a hope that no earthenware *dogs* should be placed in his grave — saying, in a supercilious manner, ‘*Dogs* will not be able to guard my grave,’ a man of but little imagination indeed. He seemed, however, to understand birds better than he did dogs if one can judge by the Mandarin Duck *fu* which Missuss sent Her Friend.

When not translating poetry, Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos chatted about Chinese history ancient and modern, and one day Missuss asked what had inspired him to play the active part which he did in the Revolution of 1911. He replied instantly, ‘the life of Yo Fei’: he then proceeded to talk at great length about this hero of the twelfth century, who devoted his life to the defence of his country, and who, finally, died through treachery.

The teacher described, too, in a most vivid way, the ceremony which took place at Peking in 1915 when the spirit of Yo Fei was raised to an equality with that of Kuan Ti, the Patron Saint of Bravery — generally called by Europeans the ‘God of War’: at the same time the spirits of twenty-four other celebrated military leaders and patriots were admitted to the Military Temple as their associates.

This reorganization of what may be called the Cult of Heroes was prompted by the desire to raise in public estimation the profession of arms, and it is before the

Military Temple that present-day soldiers are supposed to take their oaths. There are no images in the temple, but simply plain narrow strips of wood each bearing the spirit title of the hero it represents, and the tablets of Kuan Ti and Yo Fei, which stand in the centre, are larger than the others. Kuan Ti is called the Marquis of Martial Dignity, and Yo Fei, to whom Young China especially turns its eyes, is named the Prince of Loyalty and Courage.

.

Now Missuss, who was growing very fond of me, had often spoken of changing my name 'Buster' to something more in keeping with my personality. It appeared that her pets were always called after famous people; a strange Western custom which is incredibly disrespectful in the eyes of my country-people. She had been undecided as to which Chinese hero should provide me with a suitable cognomen; but she was undecided no longer; stirred by Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos' words, she rose from her chair, crossed the room to my basket, and, bending over me, exclaimed impulsively, 'Prior-Born, we will call the little thing — Yo Fei.'



V

WE Chinese feel very strongly on the subject of names, and look upon them as something to be literally lived up

to; we often change them during our lives as new avenues open to us, so it seemed quite natural to me that, when my condition changed greatly, my name should change too. Not that I entirely approved of all these changes. At first some things in my new life were most irksome. The 'jinrickshaw coolies,' for instance, annoyed me to a turn; they were forever 'keeping an eye on me,' and I found it difficult to escape their attentions, except at night. Naturally I longed to visit my old haunts, but after I had given our coolies the slip, several evenings running, they insisted that I have a harness with bells. The bells were brass and very pretty. The character for 'King' was moulded on them, thus suggesting the tiger, 'King of beasts,' and a protection against evil influences. My brindle coat added to this illusion; and as I jingled through the villages, children called after me, 'there goes the little tiger.' I realized that the bells added to my appearance, so rather liked them in the end, and they were certainly a great comfort to the jinrickshaw coolies.

A 'coolie' is, speaking literally, a person who earns his living by the exertion of *k'u*, — 'bitter,' *li* — 'strength.' A 'jinrickshaw,' as all the world knows, is a funny little carriage on two wheels drawn by a man who runs between the shafts. What all the world does not know, however, is that these little carriages are not a Chinese conveyance at all, but were brought to my country from Japan where they were invented by an American missionary.

The word 'jinrickshaw' is a corruption of the Chinese name for this vehicle, *jên li ch'ê*, 'man's strength carriage.'

In cities the life of a 'rickshaw coolie' is very dreadful, and the people whom he draws in his carriage are often thoughtless and cruel; urging him on, swearing at him, prodding him, and sometimes striking him. Even if his passenger be kind, the conditions under which he works are dreadful. In Winter, between fares, he must sit, all perspiring tho' he be, in an icy wind or driving rain, with only the scant protection afforded by his blue cotton coat; in Summer he must strain every muscle to run in the devastating heat. Some kind-hearted people will not hire 'rickshaws' — and then the coolie starves.

Modern Chinese poets feel industrial conditions deeply, and that brilliant young reformer Hu Shih writes vividly about them. Some person, unknown to me, has translated a little poem of his called 'The Rickshaw Man':

'Rickshaw! Rickshaw!'

Clattering it comes.

Eye I the rickshawman — my heart of a sudden numbs.

Ask I the rickshawman: 'Tell me, how old are you? How long been pulling a shaw?'

Rickshawman answers: 'Fifteen this year; three years pulling away at this job — I'm telling the truth, the whole.'

I to the rickshaw man: 'Far too young are you. Use your shaw? not I! If I used your shaw, there'd be an aching in my soul.'

Rickshawman to me: 'Half a day I've pulled no fare; I've eaten not one roll — your noble aches of heart bring me no rice-filled bowl!

Young though I still may be, the cops don't give a hang — why trouble your lordly soul?'

Enough! I mount the shaw: 'To the city — pull, you rascal, pull.'

In Wei-Hai-Wei conditions were very different. As the roads were hilly, Missuss had two coolies, who were in her sole employ. One ambled in a dignified manner between the shafts and the other, a loose-limbed giant, pushed the little carriage from behind. Towards dusk every day we always went out, and we often took the shore road. Arrived at the beach the coolies would put down the 'rickshaw shafts and we all watched the fishing boats, painted to resemble monsters of the deep, as they made for home before the sunset breeze.

Tall coolie was loquacious and conversed fluently as he pushed. Before I came to Missuss she had hunted in the hillside villages for a 'short-mouthed laughing dog,' and the coolies had pushed her from one hamlet to the next, between the fields of sweet potatoes, ground nuts, and millet; both tall millet, of which I have already spoken, and short millet with curled ears like green caterpillars. Tall coolie was anxious that Missuss should have a puppy; 'otherwise,' he said, 'the *ha pa* will not understand your words.' Now this was very sensible on his part. Humans seldom stop to consider that animals who are accustomed to hearing one language, do not necessarily understand another. Missuss has a book about Circuses, called 'Under the Big Top,' and in it is an extraordinary story of an elephant.

The American circus manager Harry Tammen wrote to Carl Hagenbeck for an elephant.

‘The answer to the order was an almost tearful letter from Hagenbeck.

‘Because of his friendship for Tammen, he was giving up his greatest prize, Old Mamma, his pet elephant!

‘She was more than just a mere trained beast, he wrote. The children played with her, and she was all but a nursemaid to them. It was as though Carl Hagenbeck were parting with some dearly beloved relative or a faithful servant, instead of a circus animal: . . . Then Mamma arrived!

‘The first report came with the sight of a sweating, cussing animal man who plodded wearily to the circus lot. . . . He sought the owner.

““Of all the rotten, no-good bulls I ever seen in my life,” he growled, “that new Hagenbeck elephant’s the worst! She won’t do nothing.”

““Come on down and look for yourself.”

‘Harry Tammen went, and Harry Tammen looked. He retired to his circus car that night disappointed and disgusted.

‘The wonderful elephant trumpeted and squealed and stared blankly at the shouting animal men — but obeyed not a single command. Such was Mamma’s arrival on the circus, and such was the daily programme.

‘Then Hagenbeck came to America and Tammen met him in St. Louis.



THE FISHING BOATS, PAINTED TO RESEMBLE THE MONSTERS
OF THE DEEP



““A fine elephant you sold me!” he blurted. “It hasn’t got a brain in its head!”

‘Hagenbeck almost wept.

““Ach Gott, Harry!” came excitedly. “Dot Old Mamma elephant — she iss human! All day long she played with the children, unt ven they gif her a piece of cinnamon cake — ach Gott, she’d get on her knees to thank them. I come along to her unt I say: ‘Wie gehts, Mamma,’ and —”

““Wait a minute!” A great light was beginning to break in on Harry Tammen. “What would you say?”

““Wie gehts! or, Vas ist lohse? Or —”

““That’s enough!” came from the circus owner. “You win! We’ve been trying to talk English to something that doesn’t understand any language but German.”

‘The next day Tammen approached the Hagenbeck importation.

““Wie gehts, Mamma!” he exclaimed. “Vas ist lohse?”

‘You’ve seen a dog welcome his master after a long absence. . . . Magnify that dog into a poor, lost, three-ton elephant in a strange land — then suddenly finding a familiar tone of speech — and you have Old Mamma when she caught that sentence in German. . . . She had been captured by German-speaking members of a Hagenbeck expedition, trained by a German, and received her every command in German, and it was not until patient animal men, giving first the command in German and then

repeating it in English, had "taught" her the language of her new home that she became of value. . . . To-day it is Mamma who leads the elephant herd of the big circus, . . . who is first to catch the trainer's command in the ring.'

I wish that every human would read that story! As for myself I understand Chinese and English, of course, and a few words of French such as '*mon petit chou*,' and other pleasant terms which Missuss uses.

I suddenly realize that I have not yet described my own appearance. The *k'an kuan*, 'officer who scans carefully,' a term we Chinese use when an Englishman would say 'gentle reader,' must wonder what manner of dog I am. The pictures my Aunt Douglass has made will help him to visualize me, but I will also quote part of a letter which I once wrote to a gentleman Missuss met when she was travelling on the Great River. Later my Aunt Douglass met the same gentleman, and found that he had been much interested in me. I therefore wrote him as follows:

Dear Mr. Consul X—:

I was very much touched with the message you sent me by my Aunt Douglass. I like appreciation and never forget my friends, so when she came and told me that you wanted my picture, I was glad that Missuss had taken a new roll of photographs, some of which are quite good. I enclose them herewith. Of course I cannot feel — and

I am sure you would agree with me, were you in a position to judge — that they do me justice. Nor is it for me to tell you about my lovely brindle coat which shines with such a sheen that Missuss calls me her 'gold silk *ha pa*'; of my silver paws; — you know, I suppose, that the Chinese consider a yellow dog with white legs a 'dog of luck'? — of my enormous brown eyes, that sometimes gleam with a green or red light; my sable ears; my coal-black muzzle; my immaculate white waistcoat; my deep frog mouth; my little white teeth; or my astounding intelligence; Aunt Douglass will do all this. There is, however, one point which she may miss; a point of which I am duly proud — my tail. It is a perfect 'Ch'ih Wei' which means 'Owl Tail'; that is the name of the lovely creature which holds the roof spine of houses in its mouth, and throws its tail into a perfect circle above its head. Do you know about this beast? It is a huge fish. When its tail comes out of the water, waves rise, and floods of rain descend, so it is naturally a great protection against fire, and that is the reason it is used, as it is, on house-tops. Now my tail makes a perfect circle, and more, and the tip for an inch or two is silver white. You can imagine how lovely this looks with my orange coat!!

I wish we might meet. Missuss told me what pleasure it had given her to travel with you, and from what she said I feel sure that you would enjoy taking me for walks. When I see a dog, no matter the size, I put my head down,

and raise the hair on my back, then advance on him going faster and faster every second. He generally runs and I have a glorious chase, but if he doesn't I hurl myself at him and bite him in the seat of the pants and that of course annoys him a good deal. The other morning, however, I had rather a bad time. I did this to a lady dog (forgive the mark, it is a misnomer), and if you will believe me she turned on me, seized me by the neck, and hurled me into the air. I came down plop — it was awfully painful; I didn't enjoy the rest of my walk especially, as, in addition, I was nearly drowned. Do you know that dreadful weed which makes a pond look like a lawn? Well, I jumped onto what I thought — any dog would have done the same — was a lawn, and, God bless me, it was a pond! Naturally I can swim, and like to, but what the reason was I do not know, my hindquarters would not come up, and Missuss says, that when she turned, she was horrified to see me pawing the air with a look of desperation in my wonderful eyes; she realized that I was rapidly sinking! The water was up to my nose. Imagine how she felt!! She hurled herself on her face, and caught me by the hair of my head — very painful, but I didn't realize it at the time — and hauled me out of the water onto dry land. It *was* a relief!! You see my life is varied but on the whole is pleasant.

My humans are very well trained, both those above, and those below stairs, and Missuss knows that to have a

perfectly obedient dog she must never ask him to do anything he does not want to; I am thankful to say she lives up to this principle. My 'Uncle Peter,' her Lord and Master, is very fond of me and gives me all sorts of tit-bits; besides, he often takes me walking, and when I ask to go out in the motor car says, 'Oh, let the little devil come.' So I go, and wear my green silk harness from the Burlington Arcade. The rest of the household is even more under my paw. You will see my greatest friend Amah, photographed with me. She de-fleas me, brushes, combs, and washes me. The last process is hateful, but one is comfortable afterwards, don't you think so?

Missuss sends her very kindest regards and hopes she will see you again some day. Believe me I am quite sincere when I say I should like to meet you — tho' at first sight I should probably try to eat you. That would pass off.

Yours truly

YO FEI



VI

Missuss received a lovely present while we were in Wei-Hai-Wei. It was a tea-set made of the local black pottery decorated with cut pewter. Mr. Cultivator-of-

Bamboos composed the design for the pewter, and the design was naturally symbolical.

The character *ai*, Missuss' surname which means 'love,' was shown in four of the ancient seal character forms. It is an ideograph especially suitable for a tea-service.

Bamboo leaves in groups of three formed the border decoration and were symbolical of all sorts of things. To start with the bamboo has seven virtues of its very own: it is clean and unspotted in itself; a sheath covers the stem as it pierces the dark earth so the bamboo has protection from 'the world'; being hollow it is symbolical of an 'empty' — that is, a pure heart; it is strong and unyielding; the stem being divided into segments is 'orderly'; the stalk is pure green without blemish; and is, lastly, eternal or 'long-enduring.'

When the leaves are shown in groups of three the plot thickens and eight further meanings are added to the picture. Firstly, it suggests the three things feared by the Perfect Man, which are Heaven's Orders, the Great Man, and the words of the Enlightened. Secondly, Happiness, Longevity, and Posterity, the three desires of mankind are alluded to. Thirdly, a woman reads in the grouping an allusion to the three persons she is supposed to 'follow' — her father, her husband, and her son. Fourthly, the little leaves are a symbol of the Three Powers, Heaven, Earth, and Man; and fifthly, of the three Enlightened

Ones, Fu Hsi, Wên Wang, and Confucius. Sixthly, they suggest the three qualities in which a man should examine himself daily — loyalty towards all men, fidelity towards his friends, and attention to the words of his instructor. Seventhly, they bring to mind the three sins which should be forgiven; those committed from ignorance, those which are past, and those committed from forgetfulness. Eighthly and lastly, they are a reminder of the three advantages of friendship; complete openness, complete sincerity with one's friend, and the great advantage of being able to 'listen to his words.'

Tea-drinking with my country-people is a very important matter, and the day Missuss received her tea-service I heard Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos tell her the story of a wealthy man named Hu who had made a perfect cult of tea-drinking. He was evidently very fussy and meticulous, so the rain-water for his tea, which was carefully collected and saved, was stored in sealed earthen-ware jars, and each bore a tag on which the date of the sealing was written.

One hot morning in early September, a wood-cutter came down from the hills, and, while he was waiting in the courtyard for the Master of the House, quenched his thirst with amber tea from the rose-red porcelain cup, standing upon a polished flowery-wood table.

Presently Hu bustled out and exploded with annoyance when he found his empty cup. 'Who has taken the

tea made with my water?’ he exclaimed. The wood-cutter rose and admitted with quiet dignity that he was the culprit; he explained that he had not realized that the tea was for some special person, nor had he thought that a drink to a tired and thirsty man would be begrudged. He apologized, however, for his temerity, and then added, ‘but the tea was very poor.’ ‘Very poor!!!!’ — further explosion and exclamation from Hu — ‘How do you mean poor?’ ‘The flavour was poor — the water cannot be good.’ ‘Water not good!!!! Why, I store and preserve it with the greatest care!!!! — not good!!!’ — the old gentleman seemed likely to explode in literal fact. The wood-cutter remained calm, and when the torrent of enquiries had subsided said, ‘If the East-Household-Master will stop his chariot at my lowly hut of red grass, among the mountain peaks, and honour me with a visit, I will offer him tea, in an unworthy cup it is true, but made of water which does justice to the flavour of the leaves.’ Hu hesitated for a moment, and then, with the curt remark, ‘On the bright morrow I come,’ turned and entered the house.

The period of White Dews had arrived, and day dawned the next morning on a wide wet world. Hu rose and started for the hills in his comfortable sedan chair. Before long, however, the distress of his chair-bearers obliged him to abandon such a luxurious method of progression, and take to his own feet. As he toiled up and up, lines from the

poem of Li T'ai-po, that great lover of the hills, sprang to his lips:

How the road coils and coils through the Green Mud Pass!
With nine turns to a hundred steps, it winds round the ledges of the
mountain crests.¹

Surely the poet must have visited this very spot. Another turn! Another ascending vista! Hu groaned aloud, and quoted further, 'Alas! How endless a road for man to undertake! How came he to attempt it!' Only the irritating thought of that calm, composed wood-cutter, one of the uninstructed people who had presumed to boast of his own tea, goaded the stout old gentleman to further efforts, and eventually he did arrive at the red-grass hut among the jagged peaks, where he found the wood-cutter waiting. Fussy and meticulous as he was in daily life, Hu yet possessed the true Chinese love of peace and solitude, and, while his host prepared tea, sat speechless before the wide view of hills and water which stretched at his feet. The place reminded him of the scene described in vital ideographs on a 'written picture' he possessed, and as the wood-cutter set a tea-bowl before him on the rough wooden table, he murmured:

The faint snuff colour of trees
Closes the horizon.

¹ From *Fir-Flower Tablets*: Poems translated from the Chinese by Florence Ayscough; English Versions by Amy Lowell. Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1921.

All about me
Sharp peaks jag upward;
But through my window,
And beyond,
Is the smooth, broad brightness
Of the setting sun.¹

His mind thus attuned, Hu lifted the bowl and put the fragrant liquid to his lips. He drank it all in silence, and after a pause said humbly in an awed tone, 'It is good — good to the extremities of Heaven and Earth! Dare I ask the name? Is it "black dragon," or "white down"? No, the flavour is more like that of "bird's tongue" or "before the rains."' The wood-cutter smiled and then said, 'My Lord is mistaken in thinking that the variety of tea is all-important. Of course the leaves must be properly treated, but what gives the flavour is the water used. My Lord can never have tea like this because he cannot obtain such water. Does he see that dip in the mountain-side? Beyond that ridge there lies a lake fed by an everlasting spring; in the lake ten thousand lotus plants spread their wide leaves and bring forth their blossoms, white and rose-red. I rise in the light of the still-concealed sun, and make my way by a bird's path to the shore of that lake, and, wading in the shallow water, drain from the heart of each leaf, one by one, the crystal dewdrops collected there. With these dewdrops I infuse my tea.'

¹ From *Fir-Flower Tablets*.

Such was the tale as it fell from the lips of Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos, one bright Summer day on the shore of the Yellow Sea, and so Missuss repeated it in the Summer of the next year to the Lady-of-Fine-Perception in New England. They stood in the willow walk by the brink of her lotus pool which lies, not among jagged peaks, but in her Enchanted Garden on the shore of the broad Atlantic.

That was in nineteen hundred and twenty-one. Last year Missuss visited the Lady-of-Fine-Perception again, and as Biggs, the butler, set the tea-table before them on the wide verandah, the Lady said, 'Do you remember the story you told me about the dewdrops in the lotus leaves? Well, a curious thing happened this Summer. When I returned from abroad the tea was undrinkable. Biggs declared that it was caravan tea such as we had always had, but day after day I sent it away untasted. I knew that the water-works in the town were being enlarged, and that the water drawn temporarily from a new source was very hard, but did not think of this in connection with the bad tea. However, one day, to my surprise and delight, the tea was perfectly delicious. I called Biggs and congratulated him on having made it properly at last. He smiled and said quietly, 'Madam told Gardener a story which Mrs. Ayscough had told her, about water collected from lotus leaves. The lake supply we are getting now is useless for tea; this is made with dewdrop water from the lotus leaves.'

VII

AUTUMN came again and I was a full year old. It was during the period of Cold Dew that we took a ship to go South. When we went on board, I wore my harness, and although the bells were beautifully polished, I think that my gold coat shone even more brightly than they did.

A very large man, wearing dark blue clothes and buttons as bright as my bells, approached us as we stood on deck. He touched his cap to Missuss and said, 'Ah! I see you have a canary.' 'Yes,' answered Missuss, 'and canaries of course travel in one's cabin?' 'Why, certainly,' he replied and passed on. These cryptic remarks seemed to give Missuss much satisfaction, and she said, 'Let's hurry below, Yo Fei, before he changes his mind.' I was quite comfortable in the cabin, as Missuss had brought my basket, but she went to bed in a sort of box fastened to the wall! It is my habit when surprised or puzzled to ask questions by sitting up on end, and when I saw Missuss tucked up in that strange contraption I promptly hopped out of my basket and sat an astonished sit.



PART TWO

WILD GOOSE HAPPINESS HOUSE IN THE
CITY-ABOVE-THE-SEA

PART TWO

Wild Goose Happiness House in the City-above-the-Sea

I

WE now went to live in Wild Goose Happiness House on the Yellow Reach above the Sea, and as I passed some time there perhaps I should describe the inmates I found.

There was William, a very old fox terrier, and although I tried hard to please him he was never enthusiastic about my coming; however, he was a good watch dog and taught me to be very careful about any suspicious characters who might come about the place. He did the chasing, and as he had no teeth was glad to have me do the biting.

Then there were two huge cats, Curzon and Kitchener. I learned that although not brothers they were kittens of the same season, and had come to Wild Goose Happiness House within a few weeks of each other, many, many years ago. They were not like our beautiful cats of Shantung, which have long soft white hair and eyes of two colours — that is, one blue eye and one greenish grey; oh, no, they were brownish cats with a black glossy pattern all over them. Curzon was a dear old thing, but Kitchener!!! Never, never have I met with such self-satisfied, intoler-

able egotism, conceit, and indifference. Stretched in the sun he would allow Curzon to lick him clean instead of doing it himself. They were always together, and Curzon was always in attendance on Kitchener. Indeed, when they died, quite an interesting article called 'Master and Man' appeared about them in the local paper, so famous were these cats.

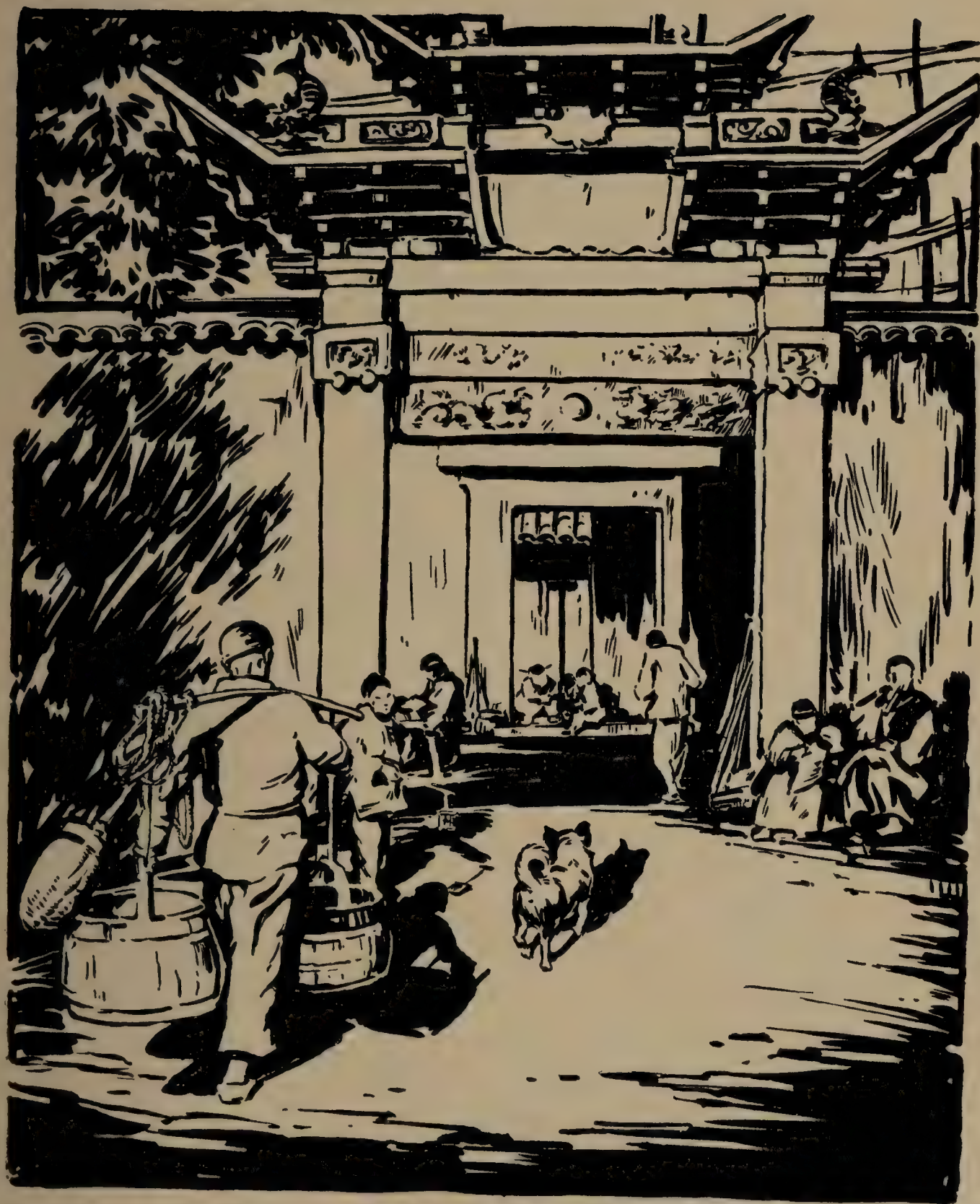
Of the humans the most important were Amah and Achay.

Amah came from a fishing village down the coast where she owned a house and land, and she often chatted about her neighbours there, describing how the wives of the fishermen would 'walkee walkee all night' when a storm raged and their men were at sea. She went home for a month when her son was married and told us wonderful stories about the feast she had given to a hundred people and more; about the roast ox and boiled sheep she had provided; and about the fine trousseau the bride had brought home. Amah had been in charge of Missuss since the end of the last century and was very capable indeed, even if sometimes severe. She looked upon the house as largely hers and behaved accordingly. One day Missuss begged her to be careful about some incense sticks which were burning before the Empress of Heaven, and Amah replied in a soothing tone, as tho' reasoning with a little child, 'You house b'long my house. My no wantchee burn house.' Missuss said no more! Amah took charge of me

when I arrived and cared for me day and night. During the mosquito season she always covered me with a contraption which looked like a meat safe. It is very dangerous to let little dogs be bitten by mosquitoes, as this pest carries the germ of — dear me, the name is so long I can't remember it; but at all events it is the 'bug' which gives us the fatal disease known as worms in the heart. I appreciated the cover. Indeed, I would not sleep without it. One day I heard Amah describing to Missuss how I had sat in a corner with an 'angry face' the night before, refusing to go to bed because she had forgotten it. I said that Amah was severe. So she was to other people, but never severe to me. The fact is, my country-people never bother dogs or children with perpetual orders as to what they are, and are not, to do.

Achay, the downstairs coolie, was one of those rare understanding humans with whom animals can really establish intimate relations; even Kitchener the Cold would sit on the edge of the sink purring whilst Achay washed dishes. He had a large family of children, and as they loved me I often went to play with them in the Village of Peace and Good Fortune which adjoined our house. His little girl Plum Blossom reminded me of Golden Bells; she wore her hair in many tiny red-braided pig-tails which stuck out from all over her head, and Achay liked to paint crimson 'peach-flower' marks on her forehead and cheeks to make her fair skin look fairer still.

We were proud of our village because in the very centre of the main path there stood a granite *p'ai lou*, a memorial arch erected by imperial permission. There were only two supports, it is true (some arches have twelve); but was there not a tablet at the very top, bearing the characters Yü Chih — Imperial Decree? And did not the wide tablet in a line with the second roofing state that the arch had been erected in commemoration of Chastity? The Yang or Poplar Clan never forgot that one of their great-great-great-grandmothers had been honoured in this manner and they held their heads a trifle high. Even had they not done so, no one could remain in ignorance of the honour, as the traffic of the village passed perforce between its pillars, and the inhabitants treated it as a sort of centre. Old people sat by it sunning themselves, children brought their crickets in little cages to sing in its shadow, and I always used it myself when on my way to see Achay's children. In fact the grave dignity of our *p'ai lou* pervaded the Village of Peace and Good Fortune. Achay had come to our house some years before in place of an individual named Shih Di, Number Ten, who was a constant trial to Number One Boy. Finally Boy said that Shih Di must go. Of course Missuss never interfered with Boy's mandate, because he knew much more about running a house than she did, and he had been with her since the earliest days of her house-keeping. On this occasion, however, she felt badly to have the amiable Shih Di leave;



THE GRAVE DIGNITY OF OUR P'AI LOU PERVADED THE VILLAGE OF
PEACE AND GOOD FORTUNE

for one thing she liked the sound of his flute as it rose from the back quarters, so she suggested that she talk the matter over with him. Number Ten appeared. Missuss looking as judicial as possible addressed him from the vantage-point of a high-back arm-chair: 'How fashion Shih Di? Number One Boy talkee my you b'long too much lazy. You b'long young man, strong man, clever man, savee English talkee; how fashion lazy?' Number Ten bent down, and replied with a seraphic smile: 'Mississee, my too muchee likee play, play. My too muchee likee sleep. My no *likee* do *pidgin*.'

Pidgin, of course, means 'work.' Nothing further could be done. Shih Di left and found a position to his liking under the ægis of the Municipal Council. As a foreman of works he now rides a bicycle from point to point inspecting the gangs of men who repair the roads.

The other humans in Wild Goose Happiness House were all considerate and devoted, but hardly need detailed enumeration. Naturally a place was always laid for me when the staff took their meals. I had my own stool and rice-bowl, and soon taught cook my taste in food; it was quite easy — I simply refused to eat what did not please me and he quickly provided me with what did. Amah scolded and said, 'Yo Fei mouth too muchee bad'; nevertheless I had my mutton roasted, and if there were some dish in old Shantung style, such as 'flakes of

rose hibiscus fowl' or 'raven fish eggs,' nobody dreamed of touching it until I was satisfied.

We were very, very happy.



II

THE garden was a joy to me. I loved to race up and down the lawn, and then rest in the shade of the great camphor tree while Missuss had afternoon tea with a biscuit or two for me thrown in.

We had a good many parties in the garden one way and another, but one especially remains in my mind. It came off early in the Second Moon when the dragon who controls the rain and clouds is supposed to raise his head after his Winter sleep. Number One Boy came and asked Missuss whether the dragons which were to dance that night might receive their offerings in the garden, and Missuss was delighted that they should do so.

Everybody was busy all the afternoon arranging the best dishes, the silver candlesticks and bowls all filled with cakes and fruits. They were placed on the flat grass platform which stood near the camphor tree, and after dark the dragons came one by one. Each was formed by a line of about fifty men who carried oblong lanterns mounted on sticks. A long silk covering was stretched over all these lanterns, uniting them in one serpentine

body, and that was enveloped by a net casing worked with shining discs. The first man carried a dragon's head all lighted; it had great bulging eyes, and held a round ball in its mouth.

One by one they came, up the drive to the North of the house, through the little East garden out on the wide South lawn, and there each lovely shining dragon danced to the sound of drums, gongs, and cymbals; danced a slow sinuous dance which ended at the grass platform where the beneficent saurian bent his head to receive the offerings of food. When the first had finished his performance he moved to the edge of the lawn while another came and then another. When each had finished its solo dance the three moved out together and executed a wonderful trio. They wove in and out, swayed back and forth, long glittering lines of light, kept in measure by the rhythmical beat of gongs and drums. The country-people who had assembled in hundreds, urged on the dance; finally one by one the dragons glided away as they had come, going out of the garden by the little gateway to the South.

The next year, when Spring 'opened,' Missuss invited the dragons again, but it seems that the men who made up the three different serpents — they came from different villages — had met in a tea-house, and had had a serious dispute. So serious a dispute that the District Magistrate had forbidden a repetition of the ceremony.

So far as we know the dragons have never danced in the District of New Homes on the Yellow Reach, since that cold dark night of which I speak.



III

THE garden, as I say, was nice, but oh, the wide fields were nicer still. In China no hedges divide one man's property from that of his neighbours, only raised paths are used for landmarks; no white boards such as I have seen here state 'Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted'; I could race and race for miles on end.

It was a grand place for my countrymen to indulge in their characteristic sport of flying kites, and when I saw great centipedes waving in the air, or watched flower baskets with their lovely tassels floating above me, all my sporting instincts were aroused. I longed to catch them, and climbed the highest grave mounds available in what always proved vain attempts.

As the hours of time were dialled in Heaven, the immense plain altered in colour day by day. Soon after the dragon had raised his head, the willows burst their buds and Winter wheat painted the fields leek green; then came the rape — imperial yellow — standing in vivid patches under the peach trees in bloom, which,



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to quote a Chinese description, 'presented the appearance of being fire spurted from the mouth, or rosy clouds rising in the air.' Before the pageant of Spring had passed, the golden wheat was ripe for cutting, and the fields where it had stood were quickly ploughed and made ready for the cotton seed. Meanwhile other fields had grown 'catch crops' of beans, and the moment the little pods were gathered, stalks and leaves were turned into the ground in preparation to receive the rice.

Throughout the growing season crops were tended, but the farmers, both men and women, avoided the noonday hours of blistering sun, and worked bare-backed in the gloaming of dawn and dusk. At that season the plain showed a heavy, tropical, monotonous blue-green, and the eye sought variation in the cloudscapes piled high against the round blue dome of Heaven, which, at the Four Quarters, stretched to a low unbroken horizon.

After 'White Dews' the colours changed again. Harvest with its infinite variety of tone came near, and when the full crops were safely housed 'gleaning' was allowed. A man appointed for the purpose walked from East to West, from South to North, along the raised boundary paths beating a gong, and in his wake followed the poor, the unfortunate who owned no land, and they gathered what they could.

On a plain where every inch is cultivated and where the trees are necessarily few, there can be no flaming

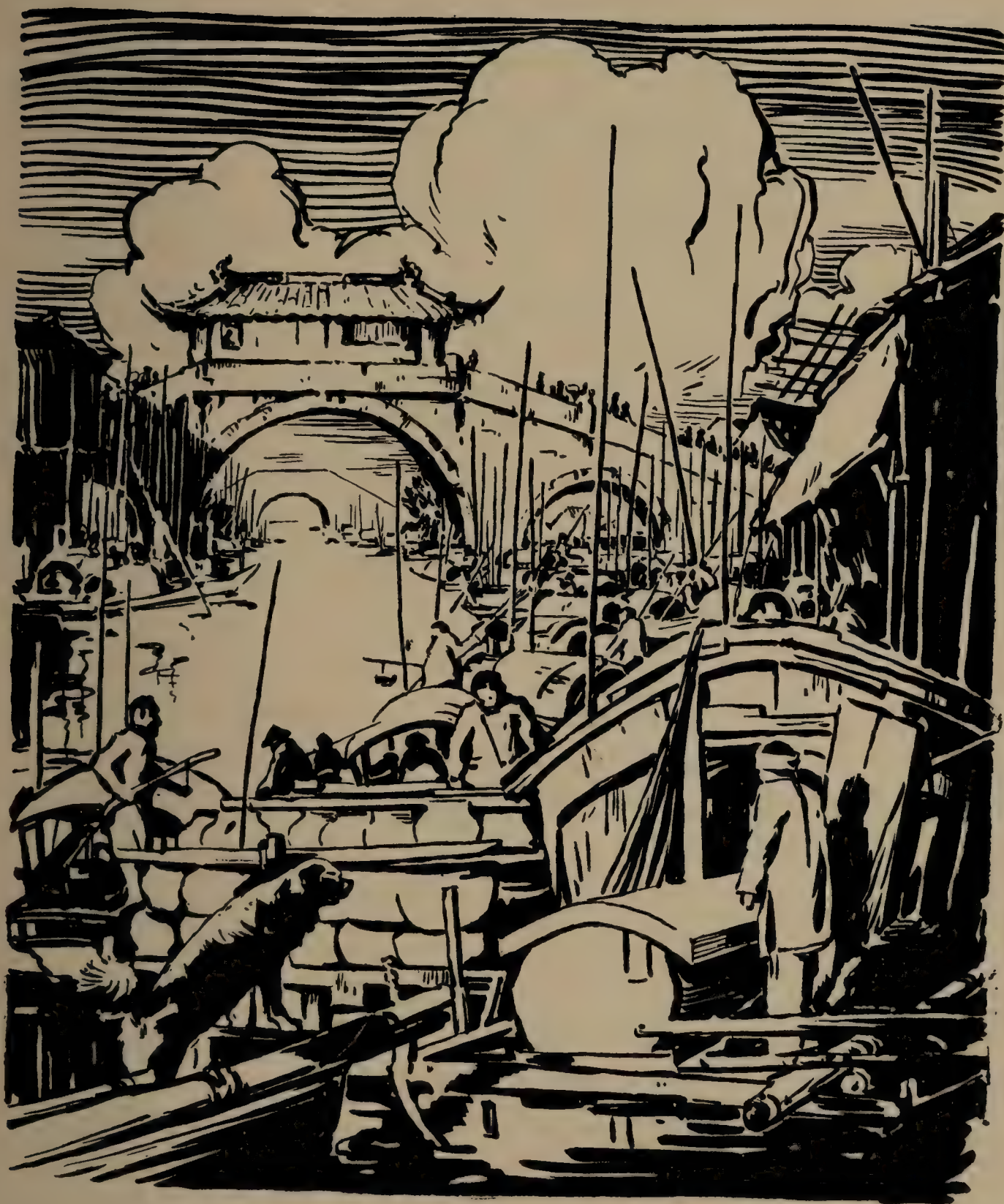
phantasy of scarlet and gold such as paints the shores on the Bay of Plentiful Fish; oh, no, the Autumn colouring is much more subtle, but to the seeing eye the gamut is very lovely and ever-changing. The dry cotton stalks provide rich purple patches, a background to the dying grass on the ten thousand grave mounds piled in every direction. This sturdy grass never turns brown in Summer; the blazing sun can do its worst, but when Autumn comes it turns red for a brief moment and then fades to a soft brown, transforming the fertile plain into what seems an arid desert relieved by the bamboo groves clustering to the North of every hamlet.

These bamboos are a marvellous shelter from the Northeast monsoon and all the Winter work of ginning cotton, plaiting sandals, carding thread, and repairing tools is carried on outside the houses in the procreant glory of the golden sunlight.



IV

My favorite walk — and Missuss took me out every day — lay across the Wu Sung Chiang, or Pine-Tree River of Wu, which foreigners call the 'Soochow Creek.' Some twelve centuries ago the famous poet Tu Fu closes a poem called 'A Jest on the Theme of a Hills and Water Scroll



THERE ARE LITERALLY 'TEN THOUSAND' BOATS PRESSED
BETWEEN ITS BANKS

by Wang Tsai'; which poem refers to the Western and the Eastern extremities of the Empire, with the words:

How did you obtain the sharp scissors from Ping Chou City —
Scissors which lay hold of the waters in the Pine-Tree River of Wu,
and cut them in half.

I fancy that it is greatly changed now-a-days. Cotton-mills, silk-mills, factories of all sorts line its sides; and there are literally 'ten thousand' boats pressed between its banks. These boats are loaded with every imaginable cargo from bales of cotton-seed to piles of pottery jars — jars of peacock blue and soft pellucid green glistening in the sunshine. They are the homes, too, of many thousand people, who are born, live, and die between their decks. So, as we ferried across the Wu Sung River, we saw Chinese life at every stage; here an infant tethered to the gunwale, there a coffin awaiting burial.

On the other side of the river we always landed at a police station. This was purely 'modern style.' Old China didn't bother with policemen and such-like things: the village elders settled difficulties. I must say that the part of modern policeman or soldier does not fit my country-people very well; they appear much more at home as farmers and workmen — creating, not destroying. After all, soldiers are not so fashionable as they were, even in the West; and it seems a pity that the Chinese should try to make popular things that other people have tried out and found inconvenient.

To return to the police — the station where we landed was in charge of a very handsome Chief. When on duty he looked imposing with many shining buttons, but I liked him best when he was 'at ease,' because then he looked natural in a long silk coat, and seemed happy 'airing his bird.'

One Autumn afternoon we crossed the creek and reached the fields behind the police station to see a wonderful sight. There, crossing a narrow stone bridge, was a most gorgeous 'Dragon Chariot.' The bearers were pushing, pulling, balancing, and supporting it, so that it should not capsize into the creek below and disturb the corpse which was taking its last journey under the wonderful embroidered pall. Flowers of happiness ran riot on a scarlet ground; shining discs acted as little mirrors to ward off evil influences; scarves of green, magenta, yellow, and scarlet were suspended across the coffin. On top stood the model of that bridge which every soul must cross when it enters the World of Shade; from above the bridge fluttered a tiny Republican flag in its stripes of five colours, and from either end of the chariot protruded the dragon's head and tail.

Accompanying the 'dragon chariot,' which took the place of the black hearse used in the Bay of Plentiful Fish, was a wonderful procession. It stretched so far in front and behind the chariot that the line of wheelbarrows carrying mourners, all dressed in snowy white, looked like a silver serpent undulating across the fields.



CROSSING A NARROW STONE BRIDGE WAS A MOST GORGEOUS
'DRAGON CHARIOT'

Missuss asked if she might take some photographs. The people in charge were delighted, and begged that she would make a picture of the wonderful things carried in front. She did her best; we ran across the fields as hard as ever we could; indeed, I heard a mourner exclaim, as Missuss passed him, jumping from furrow to furrow, 'She *can* gallop,' — but it was no use; we never did catch up with the head of the procession, so never knew what was really there. We heard, though, that the people of the village the dead man hailed from had sent a number of children dressed in magnificent historical costumes, who, placed in iron frames, stood high above the crowd on the shoulders of their bearers: a most imposing spectacle.

The chief mourner wore sackcloth robes and walked behind a screen made of white cloth. A red official umbrella, such as people used in Monarchical days, was carried behind him. Republicanism does not seem to be popular in connection with 'white affairs,' a name people apply to funerals.

It turned out that the dead man had come from a market-town to the Northwest of Shanghai; that he had left there to seek his fortune when but a youth; that he had found the fortune, and had passed his days in the busy city. Now his soul had descended to the Yellow Springs and it was right and proper that his body should lie in the family burial-ground near his 'original earth.'

The Master of Ceremonies invited us to attend the

funeral rites at the house of the Clan. As these rites spread over a considerable time, it was not until a day or two later that Missuss and I set out, accompanied by Amah and her little niece, to find the market-town where the deceased had lived. The motor-car took us to the ferry, but once on the other side of the Pine-Tree River their golden-lily feet obliged Amah and her niece to sit upon a 'small carriage.' Foreigners call these vehicles 'wheelbarrows,' but that does not seem to me a good name. They are not in the least like the Western wheelbarrows I see here in Canada. The actual form varies slightly in different parts of China, but there is always a single wheel placed between two seats made of wooden bars. The passengers, sometimes as many as nine, sit back to back on these seats, and the man who 'pushes forward a small carriage' — to use the technical term — stands between shafts behind the seats, and assists himself in the difficult task of keeping a balance by means of a strap across his shoulders. Such men are of a different social status from the unfortunate individuals who run gasping between the shafts of a jinrickshaw. They are self-respecting persons who own their 'small carriages,' and bequeath their trade to a son, a nephew, or some member of the family. One must be very skilful to 'push forward a small carriage,' as the loads are so often unbalanced; and then the man himself must adjust the weight.

Once my Aunt Douglass was travelling in the far



AMAH AND HER NIECE SAT UPON A 'SMALL CARRIAGE'

interior and wished to catch a train. No vehicle was available, nor could she explain her needs in a strange language. Finally, as despair was descending upon her, a man pushing his 'small carriage' loomed into view; one seat was already occupied by a pig strapped to the bars, but she gratefully accepted the other. The pig squealed, the wheel creaked, as 'small carriage' wheels invariably do; the assembled crowd shouted with joy; but Aunt Douglass made the train.

Missuss and I were glad that Amah and her niece had to ride as, the man being of a loquacious nature, we learnt much about the deceased, his wealth and his virtues, while the barred vehicle bumped along over the large flat paving-stones. Amah and her niece kept their balance wonderfully, and did not need the long rope stirrups hanging ready for use at the edge of the seats.

There was no difficulty in finding the house of the Wang Clan. The whole life of the little town was focussed there that day. My country-people never keep their celebrations to themselves; they expect passers-by to share in the excitement.

Inside the Great Gate stood a carved and gilded spirit screen, and on a table which ran entirely across the Guest Hall was laid a lovely cover of pale-blue satin embroidered in rose-coloured flowers. It shone softly from under the gilded wooden screens, flaming scarlet candles, golden gongs, little trumpets, and dark red 'wooden fish'

placed in readiness for the intermittent services, which were carried on by a number of yellow-robed, black-capped Taoist priests. From the ceiling hung lanterns with long bright tassels, and embroidered temple hangings in an infinite variety of colours.

The little East room was dedicated to the table of offerings laid before the spirit portrait of the dead man. In olden days the portrait would have been a painting on silk made directly after death and before *rigor mortis* had set in, but now-a-days, as in this case, the painting is often replaced by an enlarged photograph.

A handsome pewter altar-set stood on the table; the incense burner in the centre was flanked by candlesticks holding lighted candles, and by flower vases filled with chrysanthemums. There were also a number of dishes filled with fruits, cakes, and various foods, and, crowning all, a bottle of 'Old Tawny Port.'

The picture was draped in silk scarves, and beside it stood beautifully made figurines of a youth and a maid. He carried his master's pipe, while she held a tea-cup, and they both looked ready to step immediately into the World of Shade and carry on their duties in a most efficient manner.

The little East room being thus fully occupied with arrangements for the comfort of the dead, guests were received in the room to the West of the entrance; and there the son of the dead man welcomed us and thanked us for coming to his 'thatched hovel.'

It seemed, as we sat there, that every man, woman, and child who lived in that market-town must, at one time or another, have slipped through the entrance gate into the high, narrow Heaven's Well — to use the Chinese name for a courtyard open to the sky. They were all loud in their praises of the beautiful arrangements. At intervals the priests beat the 'wooden fish,' struck the gongs, and recited parts of the sacred books. It made a stirring scene, vibrating with colour and throbbing with movement.

Another picture, however, the very antithesis of this, flashed before our eyes. Turning, we looked through a doorway into an inner room which was flooded with light from the slanting rays of the setting sun, and there sat, quite alone, an old serving-woman. Her blue cotton apron was patched and faded, her face wrinkled and worn, but a perfect peace enveloped her. People might come and go, priests might murmur prayers and beat their gongs, but, bathed in sunshine, she slept the dreamless sleep of exhaustion and old age.



V

IN the autumn of that year Missuss was ill — she lay in bed for weeks, and I was greatly troubled. Strange women with white kerchiefs on their heads hovered about her;

one of them actually wanted to turn me and my basket out of the room! When she suggested it, however, Missuss tried to sit up in bed; her face grew very pink, her eyes shone very brightly, and her voice sounded different in some way. At all events, a red-headed man who happened to be there — he came several times a day — said quickly, 'No matter, no matter, the dog had better stay'; so I stayed, dull as it was lying under Missuss' bed hour after hour, day after day, week after week. The woman with the white head-dress murmured something about the folly of 'having a dog in the room of a typhoid patient,' but nothing further happened. Amah, too, was very troubled, but she felt better after she had made an enquiry by means of tally-sticks in the little temple where the Empress of Heaven sits. The response, written on yellow paper, assured her that Missuss would recover. And recover she slowly did; but to her extreme annoyance she was not well enough to take part in the ceremonies held during an eclipse of the moon. There is a legend among my people that at certain intervals the Celestial Dog swallows the moon, and that, in order to make him disgorge it, a great noise and fuss must be made.

The eclipse occurred on a still night, when the world shone in a pattern of silver, relieved by indigo shadows. As Amah and I peered from the third-story verandah over the tree-tops towards the Village of Peace and Good Fortune, we could see flaming candles, clouds of incense smoke, and many people hurrying to and fro.

Presently a little shadow crept over the moon. The Hound of Heaven had commenced his meal; and instantly the people in the village began to beat their gongs, clash their cymbals, and set off their fire-crackers. As the shadow became deeper and deeper, the noise became louder and louder. Veritable pandemonium reigned, sufficient to strike terror to the heart of any dog, be he of heaven or of earth. Amah, who reported progress at intervals to Missuss, was, I think, greatly relieved when the thin bright edge of the moon began to reappear. The planet was *saved*, and before very long shone with its accustomed brilliance over an earth grown quiet and still.

This same Celestial Dog is supposed to haunt a house where a birth takes place, as, according to popular belief, it loves to vary its diet of sun or moon by devouring newborn babies! Myself, I can't believe that any member of my race could do such a thing, but, be that as it may, ignorant people are apt to shoot arrows made of peach wood into the air as a protection for the baby who is coming into the world.

Nor do precautions cease after a child is born; the poor little thing must pass thirty dangerous 'barriers' before it reaches the age of sixteen, and *nine* of these barriers lie across its path during the first one hundred days of life! When these nine have been successfully left behind, the little child is at least beyond danger of being caught by the 'Seize Life Spirits' — spirits of girls, who, having died

before marriage, stand no chance whatever of being re-born as men; and who would be only too thankful to seize the soul of a little boy for their own use. Rich people who can afford attendants never let their children go out of doors until the ninth barrier is passed; poor people, who cannot pursue such a course, must depend on amulets and charms of every sort and kind to protect their precious babies.

Ancient coins, especially those of the T'ang and Sung Dynasties, are efficacious, and many children wear one or more suspended from their necks by a red cord. Achay's babies all have them. Metal plaques, too, are very popular, and are made in a diversity of forms, all designed to 'ward off evil influences.' Would-be mothers sometimes make temple vows, promising that, if a child be granted them, they will dress it in the robe of a priest until it reaches a certain age; and it is no uncommon sight to see a grubby-nosed little urchin playing in the gutter, his sole garment a tiny monk's habit.

Perhaps the most interesting charm of all, and one which naturally appeals deeply to me, is the silver 'dog collar' often sent to new-born baby boys by a family friend. In sending it, the friend says, by means of the symbol, 'May your little child be as easy to bring up and to nourish as are the little dogs.'

It is true that puppies are hardly ever ill; they always have a good appetite; and they but rarely die!

VI

MISSUSS owns a lovely book called 'Dogs of China and Japan in Nature and Art.' It was written by Mr. Collier; his perspicacious publishers being Messrs. Heinemann.

Now, many writers have mentioned the dogs of the Far East, but no one else has studied them. Mr. Collier, assisted by his Chinese friends, has dug in books, collected pictures, gossiped with Chinese dog-breeders, and treasured every scrap of available information on the subject of canine Orientals.

Naturally my interest is centred in his researches on my lineal and collateral kinsmen, although I recognize that the data he gives on other members of the race are valuable.

It appears that we — the Lo-sze — as well as the 'Lion-dogs,' the 'Pekingese,' the 'Japanese,' and possibly the King Charles spaniel, have descended from a common ancestor, known as the *pai* dog. The great Chinese dictionary describes a *pai* as an 'under-table' dog with short legs and short head; nor must one forget that my countrymen in the olden days sat on mats and used low tables, such as one now sees in Japan; high tables were not introduced until between a thousand and fifteen hundred years ago, so my ancestors must have had short legs! Moreover, it is said that some seventeen centuries before Christ a grand Councillor of the Emperor T'ang — Successful-in-

Repelling-Injustice — recommended that 'square' dogs be taken as tribute from the Southern Quarter. I *have* heard my Uncle Peter say: 'Why! the little blighter is square!' Could he have been thinking of my far-away ancestors?

Another reference to small dogs dates from about 500 B.C., when it is mentioned that after a day of hunting the dogs having short mouths were carried in the carts, while the big dogs were obliged to walk.

It was at about this period that my great compatriot Confucius lived, and, as I have said, he was born in my own province. He seems to have had a very real comprehension of canine feelings. Once he became separated from his disciples beyond the East Gate of the City Chêng, and a passer-by who spoke with him described his plight as 'that of a dog in a house where a death has taken place.' The Enlightened One, who spent his life wandering from place to place, trying to improve the men of his day, appreciated the force of this simile, and nodded his approbation — as he understood dogs so well, it was but natural that he should care for them; and it is recorded that he entirely approved the custom of burying a 'dear house-dog' in an old official canopy.

One of the Sung Emperors followed this custom. When he succeeded to the throne, his dead father's Lo-sze dog was in a pitiful state; it whined, moaned, and refused to eat; so the new Emperor decreed that it be placed on white

mourning cushions, and carried in the imperial chair to the royal tomb. After a while it died there, and, in obedience to an official mandate, was wrapped in a royal canopy and buried beside its master.

I am, however, running beyond my theme, and must, as my countrymen say when they start afresh, 'build another stove.' This expression is apt, as in a Chinese house the brick stove is built when the walls of a house are erected.

The *pai* dogs of early times were probably, at the beginning of the Christian era, crossed with dogs from Fu Lin, a name applied to the Roman Empire; and about A.D. 612 the Ruler of the Turkoman Country sent some very clever little dogs to the Emperor of China. They were about six inches high and one foot long; 'they could lead horses by the reins, and each was trained to light its master's path at night by carrying a torch in its mouth.' It would seem that the canine brains of the universe contributed to the evolution of my line!

Religion, too, played its part in modifying the type. When China became the headquarters of Buddhism — that is, the faith of 'Fo' — the fabulous creature known as the 'Dog of Fo' became very popular. Its prototype is the lion, and, although lions in a wild state never existed in China, they were plentiful in India as late as 1824, and were constantly sent to China as tribute up to the time of K'ang Hsi. The Buddhist lion looks very much like a dog; or perhaps I should express it the other way, as dogs have

certainly been bred to resemble the noble animal ridden by the Buddhist Saint Manjusri, which can be a dog or a lion at will.

Historical references to my relations are very numerous in Chinese books, and one who must be a direct ancestor of mine is referred to by a T'ang Dynasty poet who wrote some thirteen centuries ago: 'The arrogant pet-dog sleeps; yet growls in anger.' Painters also were interested in dogs, and a picture painted by a certain Mao I, of the Sung Dynasty, about the time William the Conqueror invaded Britain, is now in the possession of Viscount Fukuoka Takachika, Tokio. It is a small picture about ten inches square, and shows a charming short-legged mother dog with four puppies. One puppy has a highly developed cranium, and is evidently the thoughtful member of the family. Missuss, who has a reproduction of the painting, says he strongly resembles me. The picture has, moreover, a meaning 'behind its appearance,' a meaning based on word-play. It suggests the hope that five generations may live together peacefully in the same household. In China, the land of early marriages, it is by no means unusual for a man of about forty to live under the same roof-tree with his father and grandfather, yet be able to hold on his knee his baby grandson.

When the Mongols were on the throne of China, and when Marco Polo visited the Court of Kublai Khan, 'nimble,' 'golden-coated' dogs were very popular, and are

referred to in various books; but under the Ming Dynasty dogs were not especially fashionable. The Emperors adored *cats*, and bestowed official rank on cats! No wonder the dynasty fell! With the advent of the Ch'ing or Manchu Emperors, I am thankful to say that the canine race came into its own again, and the dogs, now known the world over as 'Pekingese,' were evolved. Exactly how this was done is not recorded.

I have already mentioned 'Lion-dogs.' They are long-haired and shaggy; indeed, I had a dear friend in Wei-Hai-Wei who was a 'Lion-dog,' and it was a virtual impossibility to tell which end of him to approach unless he was moving along. He was very intelligent and often referred to his Tibetan relations of ancient stock. My own line, the Lo-sze, is, as I have shown, very long indeed, but I have not yet mentioned that we are the progenitors of the English pug. Such is in truth the case; 'all the English pugs of prominence from 1865 to 1900 trace to Click, a dog of pure Chinese stock.' His parents were captured at Peking in the Chinese Emperor's palace and were brought to England. It is said that they were 'a trifle long in the body' — a family trait I inherit. In fact Amah says, 'Yo Fei too much long, more better pay doctor cuttee — two inch cuttee.' One of our race was owned by Lady Brassey, who travelled around the world in the yacht Sunbeam; it appeared in England as a 'Brassey Pug.' One was sent under that name to my Missuss when she was a young

girl. He was smooth-haired, pure black, and very clever indeed; in fact, he was responsible for Missuss' love of *ha pa* dogs. She often speaks of him, and I must say that in his picture he looks like me, but of course he lacked a golden coat.

It appears, therefore, that Lion-dogs and Lo-sze dogs have been known in China for many centuries, but the Pekingese have been prominent only since the Ch'ing Dynasty came to the throne. Being of Mongolian origin, the Manchus were naturally Buddhists of the Lamaistic branch, and encouraged any practice which would bring them into association with Buddhist saints, and the Tibetan grand lamas assisted them vigorously. It is said, indeed, that they originated the Manchu dynastic name, basing it upon the name of Manjusri Buddha, who, as I have said, is represented in Chinese literature as riding upon a lion, which lion, so the legend goes, is a transformation of his own little *ha pa* dog. I must say that the lions I have seen in temples, when travelling up-country with Missuss, are very like *ha pa* dogs. When the Tibetan lamas sent Lion-dogs to the Ch'ing Emperor, did they gracefully suggest the presentation of a steed to Manjusri Buddha? Some Chinese scholars think that they did.

At all events, the 'Pekingese' branch of my family began to appear; nor does it seem too much to suggest that they sprang from a union of the Lion-dog and the Lo-sze. Having once evolved, their popularity grew in high places,

and palace sycophants busied themselves greatly by breeding dogs, and kept a number of pictures to aid them in the process. The 'points' of these dogs were catalogued, and breeders sought to produce dogs with 'apple-shaped' or 'abacus-ball' heads. I may interpolate that my head is of the 'apple' class, and is, if I may say so, less grotesque than the other; under-shot jaws — described as 'earth covering heaven' — are deprecated, as are 'sesamun-seed ears' and 'crab-toes,' while a rolling gait like the movement of a many-finned goldfish is much admired. Uncle Peter frequently says that *I* walk like 'Jack ashore.'

The late Empress Dowager was especially devoted to my Pekingese cousins, but kept Lo-sze dogs as well, and a lady named Miao, who taught the Empress painting, made portraits of twelve imperial dogs, six of which are Lo-sze. They are called: Pomegranate; Good-Fortune — he, like myself, has white legs; Mongol, another in the same group, resembles me in being 'tiger-headed'; and so does the fourth, who is 'Precious.' With the two others, 'Ink-stand,' a black-and-white, and 'Peach,' a striped dog, I have but little in common.

The chapter on 'Dog-Breeding' in the work I refer to sums up the matter in these words:

'The Chinese occasionally cross the breeds of the three races of dogs — the lion, the pug, and the Pekingese — and it seems likely that the stock has from time to time been much varied by importation of new blood from

various parts of the vast Chinese Empire — a fortunate circumstance, for the breed would, no doubt, be wanting in gameness and fail to possess the spirited and fearless carriage which are among the most important factors in its strong individuality, had there been no cross-breeding from a remote past, in the restricted environment of the Peking palace. It is found that throw backs to a long-haired type, or to a short-haired pug ancestor, occur occasionally even among "Pekingese" in Europe in the absence of contamination for several generations.'

All this and very much more does Mr. Collier tell us in his wonderful book, and I should like nothing better than to go on talking about Oriental canines, but Missuss would say severely, 'You are writing an Autobiography, Yo Fei: not a review of Mr. Collier's book!' Therefore I will close this chapter with a verse which Missuss found in 'Scribner's Magazine' for June, 1926. Although the poem refers to a cat, it seems to me so apt that I cannot resist quoting it.

PEDIGREE

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Bred in expensive catteries,
The finest to be had,
Were *Ginger's* hand-picked ancestors.
My Kitty says he's glad
That *his* folks were romanticists:
His mother *loved* his dad.

B. D. F.

VII

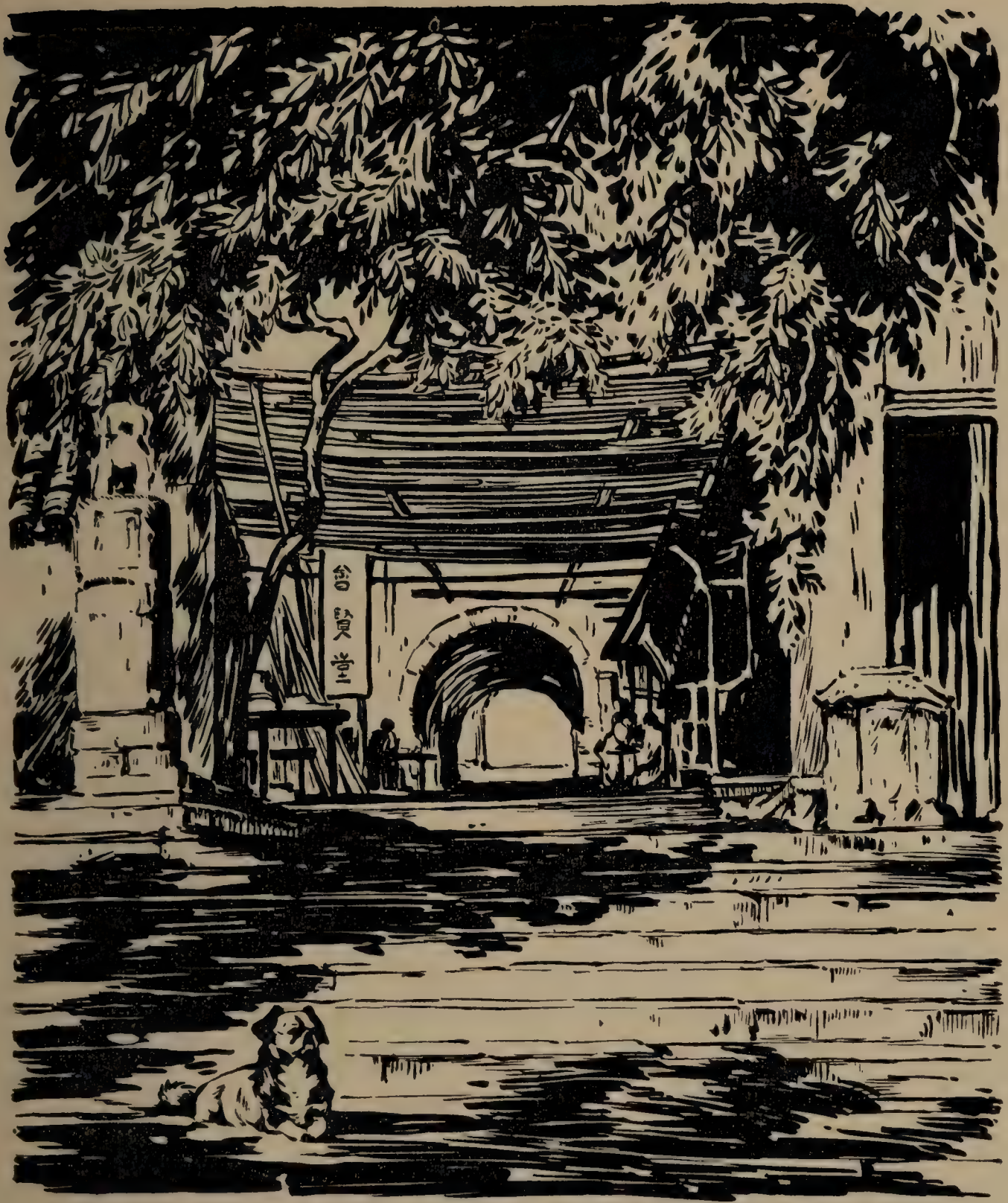
THERE is no manner of doubt that we members of the canine race are progressive. We love to go — go anywhere; we love movement for its own sake. Just consider how dogs have adopted motoring. Personally I always sit very straight and still on the front seat. No one would dream of suggesting that I sit anywhere else, but I have noticed other dogs hanging over the side of motor-cars, their tongues out, their eyes bulging with eagerness. I have heard, too, that certain members of the race are enthusiastic protagonists of aviation; this method of progression I have had no opportunity of testing. Missuss says she would like to try it, and doubtless if she does I shall accompany her, but so far my Uncle Peter has successfully headed her off from any experiment. Being thus of an impetuous, energetic, open-minded nature, it is easy to imagine how greatly I enjoyed the journeys in house-boats which we often made while in China.

These journeys took us frequently to hills, and then I almost went out of my mind with joy. I could never forget the hills at the Outpost of Defence by-the-Awe-Inspiring Sea, and the plains which lie by the Yellow Reach always struck me as lacking in variety. Run there as I would, I could use only one set of muscles.

Hills in China are even more varied than hills in other places I have seen, because, added to their natural variety

of *terrain*, *flora* and *fauna*, common to all high places, they provide villages with all the accompanying novel smells, so dear to the nose of a dog; and also temples of every size and kind. My countrymen choose the most beautiful and inaccessible spots when they build these houses designed for the enjoyment of peace and meditation. Long flights of steps lead to them, and at the top of the steps arbours are often placed: arbours where tempered sunlight drips between bamboo slats, purple wisteria blooms, or jade-green leaves. Here weary pilgrims halt, and, sitting before the Hall where Virtuous Worthies Assemble, or some other little booth with an equally appropriate name, sip tea and eat a modicum of food, thus refreshing their bodies before they penetrate to the inner sanctuary and seek refreshment for the spirit.

If the temple be a properly equipped Buddhist shrine, the first building will contain effigies of the Four Heavenly Kings, who are supposed to stand guard against all evil influences at the four quarters of the universe. In another incarnation they were four giant brothers, who, slain in a supernatural battle, were subsequently appointed to these important offices. The eldest was directed to produce, with his magic sword, the wind; while his younger brother, who holds a stringed instrument, was charged with the duty of attuning and controlling the blast. To the third brother, who is provided with an immense umbrella, belongs the responsibility of bringing forth rain, which the fourth must



ARBOURS WHERE TEMPERED SUNLIGHT DRIPS BETWEEN BAMBOO SLATS
AND PURPLE WISTARIA BLOOMS OR JADE-GREEN LEAVES

distribute evenly. By a play on words too complicated for me to explain, the four brothers suggest to the minds of 'incense guests' a phrase constantly on the lips of an agricultural people, 'Wind controlled and rain in correct quantity.' It is not to be supposed, however, that these Kings are looked upon as Divine beings; in fact, Missuss once had a most interesting conversation in pidgin English with Canton Carpenter, to whom she showed a photograph of the second brother. She said, 'This b'long what thing *joss*?' He replied with deepest scorn, 'That no b'long *joss*.' 'No b'long *joss*?' Missuss asked in surprise; 'suppose this no b'long *joss*, *joss* b'long what thing?' Canton Carpenter looked very grave and then said earnestly: '*Joss* b'long what thing? My talkee you. Sometime have got one number one man. He long time no die. Bime bye that Heaven-Head-Man sendee one chit talkee he come; sendee one heaven bird catchee he. He sit down, go top-side.' Canton Carpenter waved his arms towards the clouds, and Missuss seemed to see the heaven bird with its precious burden, winging its flight towards the sky. He paused a moment, and then concluded his discourse: 'Any man talkee he b'long number one man, makee he wood pattern, puttee inside *joss-house*.'

The word *joss*, used throughout the conversation, is a corruption of the Portuguese word *dios*, 'god'; the word *chit* means a 'letter,' and was probably imported from India by the early traders who brought with them a num-

ber of terms in local use there; while the last sentence reads in everyday English, 'Everybody said that he was a most excellent person, so they made his wooden figure and placed it in a temple.'

Missuss found the conversation most illuminating; it showed clearly that my country-people regard the figures in their shrines much as people of the West regard the figures of saints. There is *never* any representation in China of the Creator, whom my people call 'Shang Ti, Above Lord.' The figures in temples are commonly referred to as *p'u sa*, a transliteration of the Sanskrit word *bodhisattva*, meaning 'an inferior Buddha.'

Furthermore, Canton Carpenter spoke very good pidgin English, and Missuss considers that manner of speech, which is often scoffed at and referred to as 'gibberish,' interesting, useful, and enlightening. In fact, she thinks that a thorough knowledge of pidgin English is very helpful in a study of China. The sensible Eastern method of first stating clearly the matter to be discussed, and the terseness of Chinese, are always conformed to. Missuss spoke pidgin English with her staff and feels that what knowledge she may have gained of everyday China and its thought comes largely from her long use of this medium. She says that it is one thing to learn a foreign language and to express one's self in the words of another people, but quite another to use an Eastern framework and fill in the pattern with Western words, as well as hybrid words coined

in the mint of international trade. She says, too, that it is no small achievement to make one's meaning crystal-clear, and that she knows many misunderstandings arise because people do not stop to think.

We were walking through his racing-stables one day with a great friend of Missuss, a gentleman who has lived in China for many years. We heard the following conversation between him and his *mafoo*, or groom:

'That pony have ridee?'

'Have ridee.'

'What time have ridee?'

'Just now wantchee ridee.' (Wantchee is used for 'I will.')

Then the gentleman turned to Missuss and exploded: 'You see how hopeless it is! I really believe *all* Chinese are liars. I asked him if he had ridden the ponies; he said he had done so — but he hasn't!' 'Well,' said Missuss in her disgusted voice, the voice she uses when I come in from digging crabs on the creek-bank at low tide, 'you really *are* unreasonable. The *mafoo* hadn't the smallest idea that you were asking a question. You know the Chinese don't conjugate verbs, so he didn't realize that you used the past tense; nor did the rising inflection mean anything to him. He thinks of that as a mere variation of tone. You have lived here for thirty years, at least, and you should know, by this time, that when the Chinese ask a question they either use the vocal interrogation point *ma* at the end of

the sentence, or they state an alternative. In pidgin English, of course, you *must* state an alternative. If you had said, "that pony have ridee? no have ridee?" the *mafoo* would have known that you were asking whether he had done it or not, and would have told you the truth — there would have been no difficulty about it. As it is, he thinks you are giving an order, which he intends to carry out at once.'

As pidgin English sprang from the needs of trade and barter, naturally its terms are largely commercial. Mr. Hayning once told a Chinese merchant that a mutual friend of theirs was engaged to be married. The merchant gravely acquiesced, saying, 'My savee. Have putee book, no have catchee cargo.' Which means, 'I know' (savee comes from the Spanish *sabe*). 'The contract has been entered in the books, but the goods have not yet been delivered.'

I must again 'build another stove,' as I have wandered far from the shady temple steps where I sat waiting for Missuss. I could see her below me asking a direction from a blue-coated peasant. He, as is the custom of 'un-instructed people' in China, was pointing out the way with his pursed-up lips, his hands clasped behind his back. Following the direction he had indicated, we reached a village, so exactly like the one described by the poet Wang Wei, thirteen centuries ago, that Missuss could not resist quoting the poem, which she had translated, and which Her Friend had rendered into English.

The slanting sun shines on the cluster of small houses
upon the heights.

Oxen and sheep are coming home along the distant lane.
An old countryman is thinking of the herd-boy,
He leans on his staff by the thorn-branch gate, watching.
Pheasants are calling, the wheat is coming into ear,
Silk worms sleep, the mulberry-leaves are thin.
Labourers, with their hoes over their shoulders, arrive;
They speak pleasantly together, loath to part.

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We, too, heard pheasants calling, and often saw the glint of their bright feathers and heard the strong whirr of their wings. In fact, when we went up-country we saw many, many birds, and we often met bird-catchers with their long poles and sticky lime, who were trying to trap song-birds and fly-catchers to supply the bird markets so numerous in China.

My countrymen have a perfect passion for birds; not birds that they shoot, but birds they keep as pets in the most beautiful cages they can possibly afford to buy. Aunt Douglass said that one day on the Great Horse Road, which runs through the centre of the City-above-the-Sea, she was standing in front of a Bank when a magnificent limousine drove up. It was plentifully supplied with the mirrors my compatriots use in cars; not from motives of vanity, but because they afford protection from evil influences and avert accidents. I never can understand why mirrors are not adopted on this continent where motor crashes are so plentiful. The modern vehicle of

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which I speak was well supplied with this bright protection. From it stepped a Chinese gentleman, doubtless one of the Bank Directors. He was exquisitely dressed. His long, straw-coloured, fur-lined robe of satin brocade was half hidden by a short coat, deep crimson in colour, and enriched by designs of cut velvet. His close black cap was surmounted by a coral button, quite in the old style. His hands, too, were old style, as he wore the fingernails of a scholar, so long that silver casings were necessary; and suspended from one digit there dangled — a minute bird-cage. A bird-cage of ivory so exquisitely carved that it might have come from the Empress Mother's palace in the Western heavens, and behind the frail bars there sat, pressed close together, two tiny love birds.

Not only the rich, however, treasure birds; the poorest individual who labours with the bitterness of his strength indulges, if he can possibly do so, in a feathered friend kept in a bamboo cage. Larks from the North are very popular, and so are *bul-buls* with their enchanting black caps. Various fly-catchers, too, are an especial joy to my country-people. The dainty creatures sit tethered to their perches by a long string, and make abrupt flights into the air in order to catch the tiny seeds tossed up by their master. But of all the pet birds none is so coveted or so cared for as is the *hua mei*, the 'flowery eyebrows.' His classical name is *Turdus sinensis*, but who cares for exact nomenclature when they may hear the sweet song of 'flowery eyebrows'?



THE MASTER SITS QUITE COMFORTABLY ON NOTHING AT ALL

One bird will pit his skill in song against a rival, if that rival be unseen. To attain this end, their masters wrap a square of thick blue cotton cloth around the cages, and then the duo begins. Bright sounds clash and splinter in the air: it is a veritable tourney of tone; and when the tourney is done, when the hour of yellow dusk deepens momentarily, then master and bird are apt to rest, as Missuss and I have often seen them do, by the shores of some still canal. The master sits, as my country-people are able to do, quite comfortably on nothing at all; the bird, uncovered now, twitters his orison, and possibly the reflection of a far-off pagoda shivers and breaks on the skin of the water.



VIII

ONE Sunday, during the quiet after-tiffin hour which should be undisturbed, I was dozing in my downstairs basket. Missuss came into the room and, crossing to the corner book-case, climbed a little pair of steps in order to reach the top shelf; as I watched her, I saw a dark flash fly across the corner in the air. Missuss made a strange sound, came down the steps very quickly, and hurried out of the room. She soon returned with Number One Boy, and a great friend of mine who was staying with us.

Amah called him 'Mr. Hayning.' Missuss explained to them, rather breathlessly, that a rat was in the book-case, and then she went out and closed the large folding doors.

Such a performance as followed! Mr. Hayning and the Boy chased that unfortunate rat until they had killed it; the odds seemed a trifle unfair, but they both seemed quite pleased with their prowess. I heard Mr. Hayning talking with Missuss about it later, and she looked at me in a puzzled way, but said nothing.

That evening, however, when Amah was brushing her hair (I was then lying in my upstairs basket), I heard her say, 'Amah, Mr. Hayning think so Yo Fei no b'long clever dog. To-day you savee have got one piece rat. This side run, run — that side run, run — Yo Fei sit down basket no look-see — anything no talkee. Mr. Hayning think so Yo Fei b'long too much stupid.'

Amah straightened up, and pulled the strand of long brown hair she was brushing (I saw Missuss wince), and exclaimed like a flash, 'Yo Fei no b'long poussie — how fashion? Missuss no talkee Mr. Hayning, Yo Fei never do rat pidgin?'



Amah, who understood me so well, liked to have me go everywhere with her, so one morning when Missuss, who

was busy, suggested that she go into the Chinese city to buy some tassels which were needed for the hanging lamps, and that she then proceed to the Third Horse Road to buy purple raw silk because 'Yo Fei basket have spilam,' Amah said at once, 'More better Yo Fei long my go.'

The red motor-car took us to the City entrance, but in spite of her golden-lily feet Amah had to walk after that; no motor-car could make its way through city traffic jammed, as it is, into streets eight or nine feet wide. I knew the city very well, as Missuss often took me there, and the crowd and bustle did not confuse me as it might have done some members of my race. In fact, the sights, sounds, and smells — which I have heard humans object to — were most alluring to me.

Representatives of every type of my countrymen are met with in those glittering patterned streets where colour runs riot. Rich men hurtle along in sedan chairs. Their bearers, in order to clear the road, utter loud cries of warning, cries which custom demands shall be instantly obeyed; not because the passengers may be wealthy and powerful, but because the chair-bearers would suffer were their swinging stride interrupted, and their harmonious coöperation interfered with. Beggars, members of an organized fraternity in my country, ply their trade to right and left, but carefully avoid certain shops, which, recognizing their existence, pay a monthly sum to the Chief of the Beggars' Guild.

Such shops display a sign, often made in the shape of the beggar's gourd, on which the words 'great joy, benefit to trade,' are written; seeing such a sign none of the 'desire rice' brotherhood dreams of intruding. Failing the sign, however, shops are liable to visits at all hours from beggars, who, added to their already terrible appearance, beat their gongs, and reiterate their plaintive cry, '*Ta-ma-ma — Ta-ma-ma — Ta-ma-ma*,' with persistence worthy of a better cause. Beggars in the West, I believe, proceed on a more individual basis and keep their takings which my country-people pool — harmonious coöperation again! It is the keystone of our arch in China.

Water-carriers; vendors with their stalls; men hired carefully to accumulate all paper bearing the written character and then burn it reverently in a special furnace provided for the purpose; idlers on their way to tea-shops; and men who are going earnestly about their business — all these rub shoulders in the narrow streets.

Shops, too, of seemingly every sort and kind line the paths on either side. As the fronts are made of high, movable wooden shutters, taken down each morning, wares are temptingly displayed by the roadside, and people are not obliged to peer through a barrier of glass. Very fine shops have porcelain plaques inserted in their blackwood counters; others, especially those where medicines are sold, are most elaborately carved and gilded. Missuss was especially attached to the coffin shop, where

filial sons select beautiful black lacquered catafalques which their parents may admire for years before they use them. She found the grave-clothes very interesting, and the soul-banners, as well as the spirit-tablets, which are only plain strips of wood until the touch of a scholar's writing-brush transforms them into the very seat of the soul.

The most conspicuous objects about Chinese shops, however, are the signs. It is considered very important that the name chosen be a combination of lucky characters, such as *fu li*, 'happiness and profit'; *hung fa*, 'a flood of output'; and a hundred others. These characters are written on signboards of various shapes and are hung in pairs well out into the street, one at either extremity of the shop. Some signs bear pictures of scissors, hats, and so on, as well as words, and a wealth of gold leaf and colour is expended upon their decoration. Individualism is at such a discount in my country that the shop-keeper's name is always of secondary importance. In the old days one never saw a sign, such as 'John Smith, Grocer'; but now-a-days some of my compatriots use Western methods. For instance, at the Outpost of Defence by-the-Awe-Inspiring Sea, where British ships of war spend the Summer, and where the blue-jackets order many clothes, a local tailor has written both his English and his Chinese style upon the same board. The first reads, 'Jelly Belly, Naval Tailor,' and the second, 'Ho Lin — Harmonious Concord in the Luxuriant Forest.'

Nor are all the shop signs written on stiff wooden boards. Some of my countrymen prefer cloth banners, red, yellow, or green, which they stretch across the street, and which flutter gaily in the breeze, breaking up the light in a marvellous manner. Nor is all the fluttering provided by banners. Far from it. Careful housewives suspend their laundry on bamboo poles jutting from upper windows, so spatch-cocked trousers and well-hung coats are no uncommon sight.

Missuss always liked the tassel shop, at the sign of 'Steadfast and Effulgent Prosperity.' Tassels of every imaginable size and colour, from huge fat tassels for wedding-beds to tiny frail tassels for carved bird-cages, hung here in serried ranks; and at the back of the shop under a skylight, where sunshine poured down, the workmen sat and spun the pale gold filaments into threads.

Amah and I executed our commission, and were then conscious of a most appetizing smell. Turning, we realized that a food-stall stood directly across the street. *Hai-ya*, what an accumulation of dainties! Amah, remembering that we expected to have a feast on the bright morrow, hurried across to buy some little luxury. I, too, hurried across, and sat an expectant sit, but for some unexplained reason Amah paid not the slightest attention to me. After a discussion in regard to price, she purchased a packet of golden carp and then we hurried on.

My annoyance was increased, not lessened, by the next



I, TOO, HURRIED ACROSS AND SAT AN EXPECTANT SIT

proceeding. Attracted by the tapping of a story-teller's drum, Amah turned into the market-place just beyond the bird-stalls, and there found what she was seeking — a story-teller in full swing. Fan in air, he was, with marvelous skill, impersonating a beautiful heroine, and on a bench by his side stood his tea-pot in its straw-covered, cloth-lined case. For many centuries my countrymen have used such cases, probably the prototype of Western thermos bottles. Amah sank contentedly into a seat at the edge of the crowd and prepared to listen with all her ears. As for me, I put on my angry face and turned my back to them all!

Story-tellers, geomancers, and letter-writers are among the most interesting sights in any Chinese city. From the first the 'uninstructed people' learn much of their country's history, legend, and literature; from the second they obtain replies to many questions concerning their destiny; and by means of letter-writers they communicate with far-off friends. The manner in which my countrymen address their envelopes always seems very practical to me. They first inscribe in large characters the name of the city the letter is destined to reach, then come the name of ward, or alleyway, the house number, and last of all the name of the addressee.

When Amah had heard enough about the sorrows and joys of Yang Kuei-fei, she led me back to the motor-car. We drove in silence to the Third Horse Road. Amah was

evidently still living in a world of pavilions, marble pathways, and flowery blossoms. She left me in the car when we reached the silk shop. She also left the golden carp.

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I ate it every scrap.





ON A BENCH BY HIS SIDE STOOD HIS TEAPOT IN ITS
STRAW-COVERED, CLOTH-LINED CASE

PART THREE

AT THE GRASS HUT ON THE YELLOW REACH

PART THREE

At the Grass Hut on the Yellow Reach

I

IN the course of time we left Wild Goose Happiness House, and went to live in the Grass Hut which Missuss had built in a corner of the garden, beyond the big camphor tree.

We had quite an amusing time while it was being made (Missuss has told all about it in a book she wrote, called 'A Chinese Mirror,' but I cannot say that I liked it very much when it was finished. There was no garden to speak of, just a series of courtyards alternating with buildings. I always seemed to be in the wrong enclosure and grew weary of scratching doors. Amah was very sympathetic about my inability to pass freely from one place to another, and said, 'How fashion can open door? no got hand.'

There was, however, one advantage, and my varied life has accustomed me to 'following the square and complying with the round.' The Great Gate opened directly on the road, so I could sit on our own doorsill and watch the passers-by.

I wonder if anywhere else in the world one can see the same medley of people as throng the streets in the City-

above-the-Sea on the Yellow Reach? Or whether, anywhere else, age-old customs rub shoulders with modern ideas as they do there?

The pageant of one day remains an especially vivid memory. Early in the morning an old-style funeral procession passed. The mourners in white provided a wonderful foil to the scarlet official umbrellas, the deep blue banners, and the priests in yellow and rose.

I had not even time to return to my basket before another procession appeared — my country-people thoroughly enjoy peregrinations, but this one was of a very different nature. The long, long line of marchers were all school children, and there were as many little girls as little boys. The girls wore Chinese dress, and the majority of them had chosen grey *ai kuo pu*, or 'love country cotton-cloth'; but the boys wore a strange Western garb, the uniform of 'Scouts.' The long line was headed by the flag of the Republic; and its five stripes broke, shivered, and interlaced, as the flag fluttered in the breeze. The colour red stands for China proper, or the Eighteen Provinces, and is at the top of the standard; yellow for Manchuria comes next; then blue for Mongolia; white for Sin Kiang; and finally black for Tibet. The Republic may be but loosely knit; and the masses who compose it can have but a faint idea of what a 'people-ruled country' means; nevertheless bonds, hallowed by time, still exist between the different States, and the five-coloured flag flies over a vast stretch of

the earth's surface, a stretch so vast that within its borders Great Britain and Europe, from Novaya Zemlya to Crete, from the Ural Mountains to Cape St. Vincent, could fit so easily that eight hundred thousand to nine hundred thousand square miles would be left unoccupied. Yet people say a 'strong man is what China needs'!

A National Flag is for my country a very modern thing. It was never needed in the days before Western intercourse. Flags there were in plenty, beautiful flags, triangular, oblong; narrow and wide; small; and so large that, while the tops were fastened to a high flagstaff, the rippling tips brushed the ground. But why should a Son of Heaven need a National Standard? From his seclusion behind the rose-red walls of the 'Purple Forbidden Enclosure,' he ruled 'All-below-the-Sky,' he was father and mother of the people, and all men within the four seas which bounded a square world 'were brothers' — at least, so my country-people believed. Not until 1863 was the imperial dragon on a yellow triangle added to the National Flags of the civilized world, and with the Empire the dragon fell, his place being taken by the flag, of which I have spoken, on which the five colours of happiness are blended.

To return to the children and their procession: as they marched they sang the ancient song which Young China has adopted as its 'National Anthem.' Missuss has made a translation.

CLOUDS OF GOOD AUGURY

National Song

Clouds of good augury burn with glory,
Rising slowly they cross and re-cross, a shimmering film of light.
Sun and moon shine in brilliant splendor;
And evermore shall dawn succeed to dawn.

I do not know why the children were passing our door, but the procession was a manifestation of that nationwide effort which is being made to cultivate, in the Central Flowery State, fiery patriotism on the Occidental model.

Yet I believe it was a woman of the West who said, 'Patriotism is not enough'; and He whom the West considers its Teacher certainly taught, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'



II

IN the afternoon, during that selfsame day, at the hour when golden shadows are awry, the third procession, heralded by much music and beating of gongs, filed past the house. This time a bride had gone out from the door of her family home, and was on her way to the final ceremony which would celebrate her entry into a new clan.

I say 'final,' because, if the folk-tale is to be believed, an old man who lives in the moon, and whose white beard

has turned yellow with age, knots together the threads of affinity. Green threads and red threads, red threads and green threads, are knotted long before either bride or groom sees the light of day. Every child in China has heard the antithetical phrases:

Marriage affinity is settled in a former life.

Through five hundred ages the Knot comes down.

My 'officer who scans carefully' may wonder how this affinity is recognized — thus showing that he does not realize the long, careful, and complicated negotiations which precede marriage in my country. To begin with, a go-between is consulted, and she — as the go-between is generally a woman — first discovers whether any inhibition exists between the animals which govern the horoscopes of the young people in question. Everybody in China passes his life under the influence and protection of whichever animal governs the year of his birth. These animals, pertaining to the famous Twelve Branches, are the rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, serpent, horse, sheep, monkey, cock, dog, and pig. Now the rat hates the sheep, the ox cannot endure the horse, the tiger and the serpent are antipathetic, while the hare, weak as it is by nature, loathes the dragon; the pig and the monkey cannot agree, and individuals of my race find the conceit and aggression of the cock unendurable. It seems to me very sensible to abandon a venture that is foredoomed to failure, and that is what happens if the go-between finds that affinity can-

not exist between the youth and maid. If all is well, however, they forthwith proceed to arrange the Three Covenants and Six Ceremonies which will unite the couple. Betrothal is very binding; marriage contracts are exchanged, and the groom sends 'earnest money' with which the trousseau is bought. He also sends gifts in kind; hair ornaments of gold, or silver washed with gold, earrings, bracelets, and jewel jade if his purse permits. The bride, too, sends gifts when her marriage contract goes to the groom in exchange for his. It is considered very important for her self-respect that the trousseau and presents be as valuable as the bridegroom can afford.

For a long time Missuss was on the committee of an orphanage for Chinese girls whose marriages were carefully arranged. The rule there was that the prospective groom should provide a gold ring, gold earrings, gold-washed bracelets and breast-pin, and that he should pay sixty dollars; with the money the girl bought herself suitable clothing, and provided sheeting, mattresses, and two wadded quilts, as well as a certain amount of chinaware. For the groom's special use she bought a toothbrush and towel; chopsticks, a tea-cup, and a rice-bowl. Two days before the wedding the groom sent two pig-skin trunks to hold the trousseau when it was moved to his house.

It would be hardly possible to arrange a dignified wedding at less expense; and frequently thousands and thousands of dollars are expended on the trousseau, which is

carried through the streets in great pomp a few days before the bride herself goes to her new home.

The month during which a wedding shall take place is dependent on the girl's cyclical animal. For instance, if she lives under the protection of my race, her marriage must take place during the Tenth Moon; if, however, my enemy the cock governs her sign, the wedding comes off during the Seventh Moon. I may remark parenthetically, and without prejudice, that the Seventh Moon shines during the most dangerous and least auspicious month in the whole long year. Why! it is the period when lonely, orphan spirits roam the universe, and it is only by unremitting care that one can avoid their retribution — a 'cock bride' must therefore be very, very wary.

The groom it is who enjoys the privilege of choosing the wedding day, and he reports his choice to the family of the bride by means of a note called the *chia ch'ü t'ieh*. In the West I know that people say, irrespectively, 'a woman marries,' or 'a man marries'; but with my country-people it is quite different. They say a woman will *chia*, using a character composed of the 'woman' radical combined with the ideogram *chia*, 'home'; and that, I may say, shows a roof with a pig under it. A man, however, will *ch'ü*, and this character is composed of the 'woman' radical combined with the ideogram *ch'ü*, to 'lay hold of' or 'seize'; which ideogram shows a hand holding an ear. Soon after this *t'ieh* or note has been despatched, the groom sends

his wedding gifts, in shining red lacquer receptacles, both open trays and tightly shut boxes, and one of the trays is sure to hold a live white goose. Indeed, this ceremony, when presents pass between the houses, is fifth of the famous 'six,' and is called 'the sending of the goose.' As white is the sign of mourning, the bird emblem of conjugal fidelity is daubed with red, the colour of happiness. Weddings, I may add, are referred to by my country-people as 'the red affairs.'

Having received this warning that the moment of parting with their daughter is near, the bride's family delivers the trousseau which has been bought with the bridegroom's money. Such a marvellous procession as then trails along the public highway! Chairs, tables, wardrobes, chests — all the household goods; porcelain dishes; vases full of paper flowers, and scarlet trunks filled, as all the world knows, with dresses of silk and satin, and coats lined with softest furs. Wadded silk bed quilts, folded and piled high in a riot of colour, always have a place in the procession, as do 'lucky gifts,' such as the leaves of 'ten thousand years green,' or rosy pæony blooms, emblems of wealth; and various articles which convey a wish for speedy and numerous progeny. There is no limit to the magnificence possible if the bridegroom be well-to-do.

The sending of the goose in the case of which I speak had been very fine, and Amah had hurried out into the street to enjoy it, exclaiming, '*Hai-ya, hai-ya, wu ts'ai hua*

hung!' 'Dear me, dear me! the five colours of good fortune! flowers! vermillion!' — which is the way my country-people describe any festive decorations or gorgeous display.

The wedding cortège itself is not so very elaborate, but the bridal chair is magnificence incarnate. It is covered with heavy, expensive, scarlet cloth, and this cloth, embroidered with every imaginable symbol of good fortune, is studded with ten thousand brilliant discs, which discs serve as little mirrors to avert evil influences. Moreover, the sounds which accompany the bride are very elaborate indeed. From drums, cymbals, gongs, trumpets, and brass instruments of every nature issues a veritable vortex of congratulatory music; those on the four sides cannot but know that a new woman is coming. It is generally late in the day when she approaches her husband's house, and the plaited torches begin to shine at the hour of yellow dusk; so do the lanterns, huge lanterns on high poles bearing in red characters the bridegroom's surname. The ones inscribed with the bride's surname, which always set forth with the procession, turn back from a point about midway between the two homes, when the important ceremony of 'receiving the bride' takes place. At that point red visiting-cards, bearing ancestral names of bride and groom, are exchanged by friends of the two families; the lantern-bearers perform an encircling and interweaving movement, and at the precise moment they finally separate the

woman's clan name is supposed to be changed into that of her husband.

As the bride I speak of neared our house, the last rays of the setting sun shone on the drums with their embroidered coverings, carried in front of the scarlet chair. As it passed, I saw, hung at the back, a white feather fan, signal that the precious burden was within.

At that moment Amah, who likes me to go everywhere with her, hurried to the Great Gate, and we started off together to see the bride lifted from her chair. A man whose cyclical animal lives in agreement with those of the bridal couple was busily engaged in letting off strings of fire-crackers as we approached; and as the young girl, swathed in scarlet, was lifted from the chair, a protective sieve was held over her head. Every one knows that a sieve lets only good fortune pass through its meshes. She was then lifted across the threshold where a charcoal fire burned, and at once placed her foot upon a saddle which lay at the door; the words 'saddle' and 'peace' being homonyms in Chinese, the saddle serves as an emblem of harmony. The next step in the proceedings took place in front of a tablet known as the spiritual seat of 'Heaven, Earth, the Three Regions of Existence' (that is, the sky, the world, and the waters), 'the Ten Points of Direction, the Ten Thousand Spiritual Essences, and the True Ruler.' There the bride and groom together performed the deep prostration. This prostration they repeated to the tablets of his



THE LAST RAYS OF THE SETTING SUN SHONE ON THE DRUMS WITH
THEIR EMBROIDERED COVERINGS

ancestors, to the Lord of the Kitchen Stove, and to each other. Cups of wine held together by a red cord were then exchanged, and the groom unveiled his bride. He lifted the heavy scarlet square which enveloped her head, parted her veil of threaded pearls, and looked her squarely in the face for the first time. So the marriage was made.

The great dread of a 'new woman' is generally her 'Honourable Mother-in-law,' whose word is absolute in the household. She may be very charming to her daughter-in-law, *but* — she may be the reverse. Kind or cross, she must be served with devotion and complete obedience.

A bride does not leave her room until early on the third morning after the wedding day, when she steps down into the kitchen (the floor of the kitchen being actually lower than that of the rest of the house) to make ready the first meal. This rite is described in a Chinese eighth-century poem, which Missuss translated, called:

THE NEWLY MARRIED WOMAN

On the third day I step down and enter the kitchen.

I wash my hands, I prepare the thick broth with meat and vegetables,
and the thin clear soup.

I do not know my Honourable Mother-in-law's taste in regard to food.
I will first depute my husband's little sister to try it.

On the day I speak of, after we had inspected the bride as she sat on the edge of her nuptial couch listening to the remarks all guests are free to make, and after we

had partaken of tea, sweetmeats, and cake, Amah and I came home. When we stepped through the outer door into the North courtyard of the Grass Hut, one of the new, unseasoned beams cracked, ringing loudly as it did so. Amah nodded her head wisely as she shut the shining black gate behind us and said:

A newly built house rings loudly for three years.

A newly married woman talks freely for three years.



III

MANY popular sayings and ancient proverbs fell from Amah's lips. She picked them up largely from story-tellers, or, being an inveterate theatre-goer, from actors on the stage. In her own village as a child she had attended the theatrical entertainments given on festivals or on the birthday of the local saint, and she seemed to know by heart most of the plays we attended. I say 'we' because, if she could manage it, she always took me with her. I am very fortunate in such matters. Here by the Bay of Plentiful Fish I often attend the cinema; so do a few of the other dogs in the place — I leave the result to the imagination of my 'officer who scans carefully'!

A great deal has appeared lately in regard to the Chinese theatre, and most of my Western readers know that we

Chinese use no curtain to divide the stage from the auditorium. They know, too, that we use but little scenery, and that certain well-understood conventions exist which convey the actor's intention to his audience. If, for instance, the hero brandishes a riding-whip, everybody present realizes that he is supposed to be on horseback; if he mounts a table, they follow him in imagination up the rocky slope of a towering mountain; if flags are waved, the audience thrills to the advance of a victorious army; and when an oar is manipulated, a forest of masts rises before their eyes.

I wonder, however, if these same Western readers know what an important part the theatre plays in the social life of my compatriots? To begin with, as most of the plays deal with historical themes, the stage may be called the great school of history for the 'uninstructed people.' In the second place, as morality is always stressed and as the virtues set forth in the Confucian Canons are invariably upheld, irrespective of the plot, every auditor must return home glowing with the inspiration of heroic example; the stage may, therefore, be looked upon as a great force in the moulding of public opinion. Thirdly, theatrical performances are not the sole prerogative of the rich. Theatres where people buy tickets at the door are very modern affairs, and exist only in a few of the largest cities. My country-people have been accustomed for centuries, to attending gratuitously

the performances given on the stage which forms a part of every official residence devoted to the use of the Spiritual Magistrate of City Walls and City Moats, or those given at various little temples in country villages or market-towns. Rich men, too, often organize theatrical performances to take place in their own houses, in which case they expect their less fortunate neighbours to attend.

Amah says 'Country-side, Ningpo more far, small chilo plenty savee sing-song pidgin'; in fact, she contends that the instant country children hear the musical airs played by visiting troupes of actors they know what plays they are to see. She shakes her head sadly, however, over the sad fate of the little children who work in the mills in the City-above-the-Sea; they know none of these joys. To them a visit to the modern city theatre, with its entrance fee, is as unattainable as it is to their little brothers and sisters of the West; and if by some rare chance they can penetrate the magic portals, what they see means very little to their unaccustomed eyes. Amah took a little friend who works in a silk filature to see an historical play, but probably felt that she had wasted her substance in so doing. 'Anything no savee,' she announced to Missuss most dramatically. 'Liu Pei no savee; Yo Fei no savee; what thing do, no savee; handsome clothes likee look-see; sing-song likee hear; other thing no savee!'

The pidgin English word 'sing-song' used for theatrical performances shows that my country-people think of

such performances as, primarily, musical affairs, and indeed the study of music reverts to a very early date, while actual plays were not introduced until some six or seven centuries ago under the Mongol Dynasty founded by Kublai Khan.

The first reference to what might be called 'mumming' is found in the Book of Rites of the Chou Dynasty which ruled China from 1122 to 255 B.C. Several times during the year an official, appointed for the purpose, was obliged to purify houses by chasing away evil spirits. We read: 'He put on the skin of a young bear ornamented with four eyes of golden metal; his clothing was black above the waist and red below. He seized the lance, he bore a buckler, and at the head of one hundred serving-men cleansed the houses.' At the same early date the Sons of the State — that is, the sons and brothers of high dignitaries who were brought up at public expense — were instructed by learned and virtuous men in the art of music and posturing dances. Commentators of the famous book which describes the whole proceeding exclaim, 'In reality the supreme virtue of music is that it teaches the importance of perfect balance, and absolute concord.' The Fortunate Sons performed various solemn dances — the Cloud-Gateway, the Great Reunion, Vast Concord, Perfect Union, Exaltation, the Great Diffusion, and the Renowned Warrior. From this time on we read a great deal about music and dancing in the annals of

China, but nothing outstanding happened for about sixteen hundred years after the Chou officials dashed about dressed in bearskins with golden eyes, and then what *did* happen was most curious. It is said that the T'ang ruler known to history as Ming Huang, the Bright Emperor (he ruled from A.D. 713 to 756), went out with a Taoist exorcist on a fifteenth night of an Eighth Moon, when all the world lay flooded in moonlight. The exorcist flicked the soft hairy end of his fly-brush towards the moon and marvellous to relate, a wide long bridge was formed leading directly from the imperial palace on earth to the famous palace in the moon. The Bright Emperor hurried across the fine bridge and was cordially received by the inmates of the moon palace, who forthwith proceeded to entertain him with songs and dances of unusual beauty. Ming Huang watched and listened most attentively, and when he returned to earth taught these selfsame songs and dances to a band of youths and maidens whom he named 'Disciples of the Pear Garden.' The Bright Emperor, a great lover of music, had already divided his musicians into two 'Boards.' Those who performed 'below' or in front of the Great Hall were called 'Talented Members of the Standing Board,' and were held in less esteem than their confrères who made music 'within' the Hall, and were known as 'Talented Members of the Sitting Board.' It was from the personnel of the Sitting Board, to the number of three hundred, that the pupils

of the Pear Garden were chosen, and in addition several hundred palace women were selected to share in the exercises. The Emperor himself always listened to these exercises and corrected any error that might occur. This seems quite natural, as, after all, he was the only person who had witnessed the original performance in the moon! The pupils lived in the Northern Enclosure of the palace in the Halls of Eternal Spring. I believe that the substructure of these halls can still be traced; at all events, from that day to this actors have been popularly known as 'Pupils of the Pear Garden,' and they look upon the Bright Emperor as their Patron Saint; indeed, his effigy dressed in coloured robes is a part of an actor's equipment, and travels in the box with his costume and make-up.

A few hundred years later still, actual plays as we see them to-day evolved from the Pear Garden performances and with them evolved various conventions in the matter of make-up which are extremely useful. A Chinese audience, be it never so uninstructed, knows the moment an actor appears what his rôle is to be. A red face shows that a character is sacred; a long black beard is the mark of a hero; a black face shows an honest but rough individual; a white nose a mean person; and a white face a treacherous, cunning, but dignified character. Missuss was discussing theatrical make-up with a Chinese scholar one day, and he said with a sigh: 'In years to come when

Yüan Shih-k'ai is shown upon the stage, how white his face will be!' My 'officer who scans carefully' will remember that Yüan Shih-k'ai was the official whom the Manchu rulers entrusted with the task of creating the Chinese Republic. Yüan performed his task faithfully to start with, but then tempted by glory tried to become Emperor. Generally speaking, Westerners admire Yüan immensely, as being an energetic man of great force, who worked extremely hard, but my country-people look upon him as an opportunist who was false to his trust. To return to the matter of conventions; fine shades of character are shown by various combinations of colour on the face, nor are the clothes worn lacking in significance. A 'barbarian' from Central or Northern Asia is easily recognized by the fur collar he wears Winter or Summer; a beggar is known by his coat of checker-board design; an Emperor wears yellow embroidered with dragons; a frivolous woman is weighed down by her innumerable jewels, while a chaste wife or widow appears clad neatly and quietly in black. Generals and warriors of every description are gorgeously dressed, and wear, moreover, flags sticking out from their shoulders, and long pheasant feathers drooping from their brilliant head-dresses.

One morning Missuss took me out, but before we started, Amah impressed upon her that I *must* be back in time for the 'largee *chow-chow*' or important feast that was to come off at midday. My place would, of course,

be laid, and every one, including myself, would be disappointed were I late. We had many feasts, but I remember this one distinctly, as cook's brother's wife's cousin was present, and he described to us at great length a most impressive theatrical performance which he had seen the night before. A well-known actor named Hsiao was giving a series of plays dealing with the life of my own special hero Yo Fei, whom Amah always referred to by his posthumous title 'Ngo Wang' — Prince Ngo.

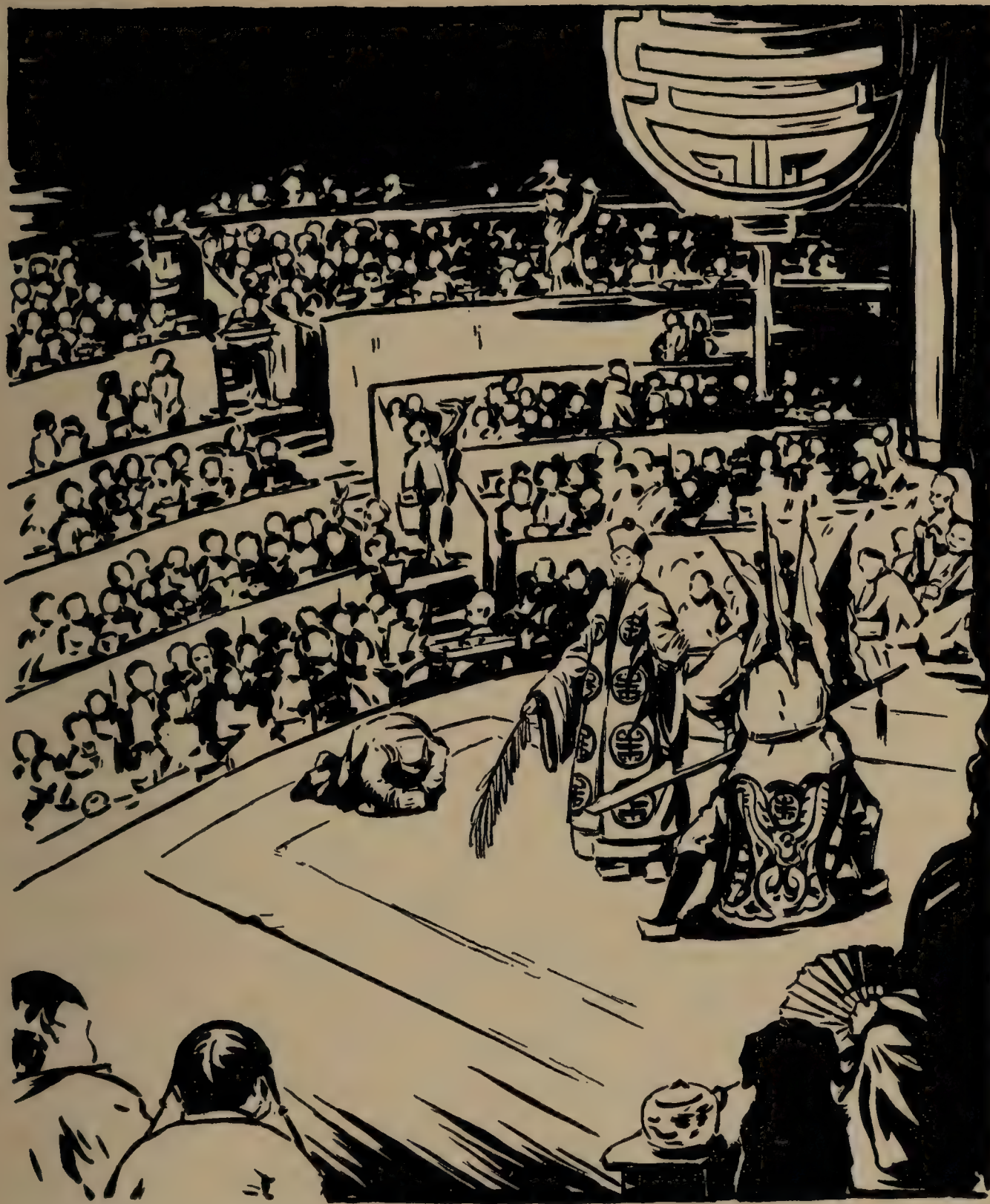
'Those on the four sides,' to use a Chinese idiom for 'everybody,' agreed that such an opportunity was not to be lost; that certainly I should see my namesake at the play. Missuss was informed and she raised no objection; in fact, she joined the party, which took place the next afternoon.

The theatre was packed. We were obliged to sit in one of the boxes on the very edge of the stage itself, so we did not miss a word of dialogue nor a note of music. In addition to the audience at a Chinese theatre, there are ever so many other functionaries, men who hire out steaming towels, which are most refreshing when plastered on the face; and men who sell tea, cakes, and watermelon seeds; they all make a constant coming and going, indeed they might be thought by fussy people to be rather disturbing. Now no one could call *me* fussy, but I found them rather trying that day. Occasionally, very occasionally, I regret that my beautiful tail has not been docked, which

is the usual fate of Lo-sze dogs' tails. As a rule it is one of my chief joys, but when I have to sit on a narrow bench in a crowded theatre it *is* an inconvenience. I can find no place to put it, so it just hangs in space, and the silver tip — a most sensitive part — is brushed by every towel-seller and watermelon seed man who passes by — very tiresome. I know I had an angry face, perhaps my back looked angry, too, as I snuggled up to Amah, who, to make matters worse, waved her fan back and forth under my nose.

The play was, I believe, very moving. It showed the great Yo Fei dressed in white mourning robes, decorated with large black velvet longevity symbols, as he came from a beleaguered city where he had rescued the spirit tablets of the Sung Dynasty rulers from defamation by the Golden Tartars. The incident is apocryphal, but neither actor nor audience considered that detail. Tears — we could see them clearly from where we sat — poured down Hsiao's face as he stood in the centre of the stage holding a 'call the soul' staff in his hand, and the audience rocked back and forth with emotion, uttering guttural sounds of '*hao! hao!*' 'Good! Good!'

A very fine man was my prototype nor was he lacking in wit. Missuss has translated the account of an interview which he once had with the weak and supine Emperor of his day. It is called 'The Reply Regarding Good Horses':



SHOWED THE GREAT YO FEI DRESSED IN WHITE MOURNING ROBES
DECORATED WITH LONGEVITY SYMBOLS

'The High and Honourable Ruler enquired of Yo Fei, saying: "Has Our minister, who, by virtue of his office, holds a corresponding tally, acquired good horses or not?" The official replied: "The servant prostrate before his Ruler once had two horses. They consumed daily many bundles of dried grass, several pecks of beans, and a pyramid measure of spring water. If the food were not clean, the water pure and limpid, they would not touch it. When mounted they cantered gently, and at first were not too eager. After they had travelled a hundred *li*, they began to hasten, as when an eagle spreads his wings above the field below and prepares for flight. Between high noon and the hour of the cock they were thus able to cover two hundred *li*. On removing breastplate and saddle their breath was not laboured, nor were they stained with sweat. They might have done nothing whatever. Thus those who receive much, and do not use it in an improper manner, have a superabundance of strength, nor are they of an importunate impulsive nature which goes to great extremes. Unfortunately, both horses sickened and died. Those I now mount do not exceed in their ration several measures of food a day. They do not fastidiously select the maize and spiked millet from their fodder, nor carefully choose the spring water they suck up. When I grasp the bridle they are not quiet and controlled, but cavort, caper, and leap about as if being urgently pressed to exertion. When they have covered a hundred *li*, their strength is

exhausted, they are in a lather from their efforts, pant heavily, and seem as if they were about to die a violent death. Thus those who exact little easily overpass their limit, are exceedingly zealous, and readily become worn out and broken down. They are of dull and stupid nature.” ’

The High and Honourable Ruler complimented and admired the reply.

The commentators feel, however, that the Emperor entirely failed to see the application, in regard to state affairs, which Yo Fei intended to suggest by his parable.

To my country-people, especially to the eager young men who to-day long to right all wrongs upon the instant, Yo Fei is the ideal of loyalty and courage.

I have already remarked that, in naming me after him, Missuss did a thing that is very disrespectful in Chinese eyes. She is sorry. She did it impulsively without realizing the depth of her offence; and now what is done cannot be undone! She thinks, indeed, that, when the spirit of the noble hero returns from the Yellow Springs below, he will not find me an unworthy exponent of loyalty and courage.



IV

AFTER a while strange things began to happen at the Grass Hut. Trunks, boxes, bags were here, there, and everywhere. I was accustomed, of course, to a few boxes at a time; Missuss often went away on journeys; but this was something unusual.

I couldn't make it out, and whenever I met my Uncle Peter or Missuss on their way from one courtyard to the other, I sat an enquiring sit. It was most disturbing.

Finally there came a morning when all the boxes were removed; it *was* a relief. Tiffin was served in the usual fashion, Missuss took her siesta on her scarlet-and-gold carved bedstead, which stands beside my official residence, and I began to think that my mental anguish had been unnecessary. This impression was strengthened when Missuss said to me later in the afternoon, '*Ni yao ch'u ch'ü ma,*' 'Would you like to go out? To go out and play with Achay's children?' I pricked up my ears at once, and curled my tail which had been feeling rather limp. Nothing is more amusing than a game with Achay's children, unless it be a country walk; and Missuss in her purple kimono didn't look as if she were going for a walk *again* that day — she had already taken me for a long run in the morning — so off I went, very chipper.

I can hardly continue my tale. The desolation when I came back that evening is beyond the power of my writing-brush to describe. My worst apprehensions were realized; there was not a trace of Uncle Peter nor of Missuss. I knew deep down inside that they would not return, but I tried to keep my hopes up by dashing to the Great Gate every evening when Mr. Hayning — who had kindly come to live with me — returned from his office. He never brought them, and I became more and more depressed.



About a month later, my Aunt Douglass, she who says that I was born with a golden bone in my mouth, came to the Grass Hut; and when I heard her voice I thought Missuss must surely be there, so I hurried to the Guest Hall, only to be disappointed again. I returned to the cook house very dejected. Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos came, too, in order to hang in their appropriate places antithetical phrases which he had composed; but fond as she had been of translating poetry, Missuss was not there to meet him.

I mention these two visits, as they had far-reaching consequences. My Aunt Douglass wrote Missuss at once, and said that I was sad. The Prior-Born wrote,

too, and he said: 'I have been to the Grass Hut. I saw your little Yo Fei. You do not know how many, few, are his unwillingnesses. He anything, everything, does not like!'

When my Missuss in far-away Canada received these two letters, as she did by the very same post, she hurried down the hill, burst open the door of the little telegraph office, and sent Mr. Hayning a cable saying that I was to start at once for the Bay of Plentiful Fish!

There is, alas, a serious limitation to which we animals must submit. We sense, grasp, and comprehend what goes on before us in a manner few humans realize, but we cannot throw our imaginations across the bounds of space. I could not understand what the happenings of the next few weeks were leading to. Mr. Hayning put me in a white iron-barred box. I had a kennel to sleep in instead of my official residence! — shavings for a pillow instead of silk! He took me in a steam launch far down the Yellow Reach. I had no eyes, however, for the varied river life; I was not interested in *san pans*, 'three boards,' the literal term used by Chinese when speaking of the little boats which constantly seek annihilation by crossing the bows of larger craft. Nor did I care for the marvellous junks; junks from the seaboard, and junks from many rivers, which throng the stream all the way from the City-above-the-Sea to Woosung; and there, where huge steamers lie, the Yellow Reach debouches into the Great River.

At Woosung we boarded one of these immense steamers, and I was put in charge of Missuss' cousin. This time there was no kind man with brass buttons who mistook me for a canary, and my kennel was placed far, far away from her cabin; indeed, I was to be attended to by — the butcher!!

The ship heaved, the ship rolled; the weather, which was hot when we started, turned icy cold. I was reminded of an incident on a voyage Missuss had made across that selfsame ocean. It was during the Great War, and the ship she was in went to Wei-Hai-Wei, my birthplace, to fetch a contingent of two thousand coolies who were to serve in France. Their ship heaved and rolled as mine was doing, and the coolies of Shantung, who do not travel much by sea, were very sad. In their misery they forwarded a complaint about their food to the captain. He, accompanied by his interpreters, staggered below, and said to the spokesman of the coolies who was writhing before him:

‘I hear that your food does not please you. Is the food not good in quality?’

‘The food is very good in quality.’

‘Is the food not well cooked?’

‘The food is very well cooked.’

‘Is there not sufficient food?’

‘The food is *very* sufficient.’

‘What, then, is the trouble with the food?’



SAN PANS, THE LITTLE BOATS WHICH CONSTANTLY SEEK ANNIHILATION
BY CROSSING THE BOWS OF THE LARGER CRAFT

‘That, Prior-Born, we do not know. The food *will not* stay down!’

I, too, disliked the food extremely. The butcher tried to dose me into eating it, but I soon stopped that — I bit him, a good bite, and after that was left alone. I neither ate nor drank. One miserable interminable day followed another.

I decided to die.

Missuss’ cousin did her best for me. I had not found her very congenial in the City-above-the-Sea. She had treated me in rather an undignified, familiar manner. But ‘by drinking of the water we learn to know the spring’! — and I may say that ever since those days she has been one of my warmest friends.

The voyage finally ended; but then we took a train; and that was infinitely worse. In order to please Missuss’ cousin I sometimes drank a little water, but I did not reverse my decision in regard to dying. Had I not possessed ‘red-brass skin and iron bones,’ I should have accomplished my end before we reached the Bay of Plentiful Fish.

One morning my kennel was lifted out of the baggage car and what was that I heard? I tried to sit a sit, but I was too weak to do so. Could it be Missuss’ voice?



I will not attempt to tell of our meeting, nor of how, for the second time, she induced me to change my mind in regard to dying.

She used eggs again — whipped up whites this time, but no whisky. I learned that the people by the Bay of Plentiful Fish consider it wrong to drink whisky. I wonder if they got this idea from my compatriot, the Great Yü, who drained our Empire some two thousand three hundred years before Christ? He was a very wise man, and my people say, 'without Yü we should all have been fishes.' He became Ruler of the Empire and just before his death went on a progress to Shaohing. While he was there, an official called E-tieh offered him wine, made from the water of a certain lake which is famous to this day for the wine made on its shores. Yü tasted the wine, and liked it, but said, 'In after ages there will be those who through wine lose their kingdoms.' So he degraded E-tieh and refused to drink pleasant wine.



The dark season has passed and the days grow perceptibly longer. Workmen have been very busy in our house up on the Hill. The motor-car is overhauled; every part is greased and oiled — indeed, I have superintended this myself, coming from the work-shop day after day as black

as a sweep. Maple trees are clothed in scarlet buds, and snow on the roads has given place to mud — rose-madder mud.

They call me and say, 'The car is at the door.' Can it be that Uncle Peter and My Missuss are coming back . . . ?





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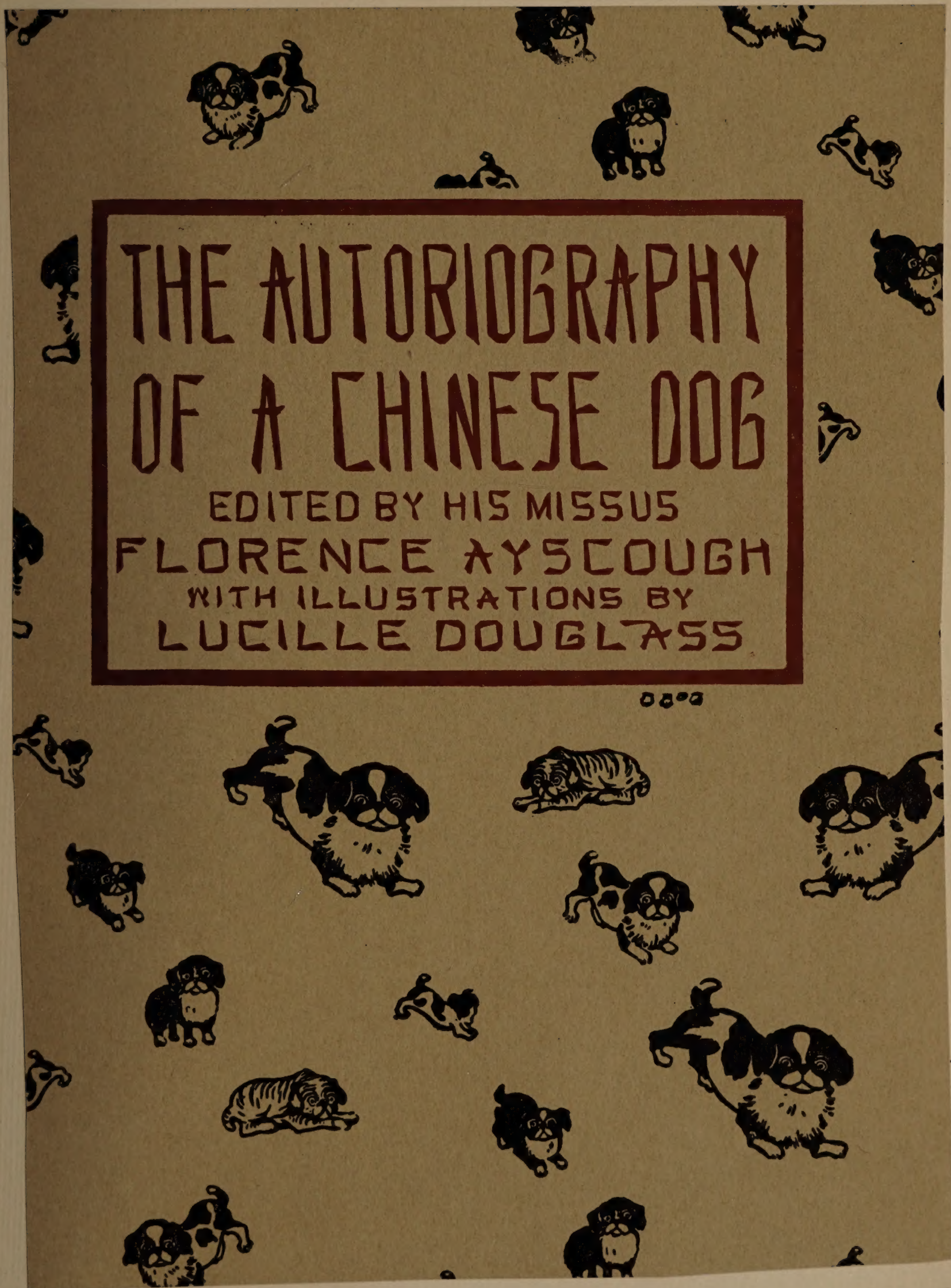


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EDITED BY HIS MISSUS
FLORENCE AYSCOUGH
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